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# THE BOOKMAN

JOHN FARRAR, *Editor* GRANT OVERTON, *Associate Editor*

## THE POINT OF VIEW

### TWO WHO WROTE

THE deaths of Anatole France and Laura Jean Libbey, not far apart, suggest the extraordinary breadth of the kingdom — or isn't it a republic? — of letters. The famous author of "Lovers Once But Strangers Now" wrote under her own name, though marriage made her Mrs. Van Mater Stilwell. Those whose memories associate her only with the old New York "Ledger", "Fireside Companion", "Family Story Paper", and her books will perhaps not realize that for three years in the 1890's she edited a fashion paper and that in 1899–1901 she was a special writer for the New York "Evening World". Of late years she had lived always in Brooklyn, in that residence district familiarly known as "the Park Slope". While she was never chosen for membership in the American Academy of Arts and Letters, she was the cynosure of at least one literary gathering not many years ago. Although her best known book was called "Miss Middleton's Lover" and another had the title "When His Love Grew Cold", and although she was cordial to interviewers, some of whom came to poke fun and lingered to half-admire, she shrank from the modern novel's candor about love and marriage, or appeared to. There is not much doubt that half the writers since (let us say) 1910 fairly appalled her.

The author of "The Revolt of the Angels" and "Penguin Island" was different. With a self assurance that exceeded Laura Jean Libbey's, he took for his open pen name the name of his country. It would never have occurred to Brooklyn's most popular author to call herself Laura America. M. France was a distinguished writer whose work and fame will now be subjected to the corrosion of time, which eats so much away. The late Mrs. Stilwell has no such ordeal to undergo; in her own lifetime she could see clearly what she was and what she wasn't; and if the spectacle was not so august as the tributes paid in his lifetime to M. France, perhaps there was less vanity to be nourished. It is useless to cry out at the word "vanity";



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all great men and women are vain, and no one begrudges this quality in them, since it is generally the warm soil from which grows their greatness. It is only when one fails to impose his vanity on the world that the world of a sudden, and actually for no better reason, finds him intolerably conceited.

## A MASTERPIECE: REX INGRAM'S OR SABATINI'S

A FAMOUS producer of plays recently sold a production of his to the motion pictures. When he read the scenario prepared by them for screen acting his remark was: "May I have the dramatic rights of this scenario? I think it would make an excellent play!" The title was the only thing about his production he recognized. Rafael Sabatini's publishers send us a letter from that modern Dumas. Just what were the misunderstandings within the motion picture industry which gave rise to the naive happenings recorded below, we do not know. It does not really matter. The spectacle of Sabatini's surprise is amazing enough, as he sees the announcement of a novelization of Rex Ingram's famous film, "Scaramouche".

Mr. Sabatini writes:

A year or so ago, in a letter of mine to Mr. Greenslet, dealing with my complete eclipse by Rex Ingram on the Metro posters, I mentioned, more or less jocularly, that in view of the character of the publicity and the strenuous efforts to keep the name of the author secret, it would not be surprising if presently it were assumed that I am the author of a novel based upon "Rex Ingram's Masterpiece, 'Scaramouche'".

It is evidently not good to jest about these things. For something even worse has happened.

I refer you to the article in the enclosed page of the "Matin". You will look there in vain for my name, just as you might look for it in vain on the magnificent posters of the "Scaramouche" film outside the Madeleine Cinema in Paris. (I have seen those posters.) That need cause you no surprise. But a flutter of surprise may agitate you when you read the closing paragraph, which may be rendered thus: "As for the arresting and picturesque romance which Jean d'Agraives has written especially for the Baudinière publications, it is worthy of Rex Ingram's film."

M. Jean d'Agraives has been requested to explain himself. Evidently he regards the request as an impertinence. Not only, he assures us, did he receive permission from the Loew-Metro Corporation to write this book, but he is making it directly from the film itself, without reference to any text, whether of the original book or of the scenario.

I conceive M. Jean d'Agraives at this moment submerged in indignant amazement at my having restrained his publisher from going further in the matter of this "arresting and picturesque romance" which he was so independently founding upon Rex Ingram's Masterpiece. And there we may leave him.

It is like an incident from "Alice in Wonderland". The movies are young; they are seldom really vicious in their blunders. But they are often spectacular in their enchanting absurdity.

## THE AMERICAN SPIRIT

JOHN S. SUMNER, secretary of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, recently debated with Ernest Boyd, the author. The subject concerned proposed legislation for strengthening the already existing law designed to punish those who publish or spread obscene, etc. (there are many adjectives) literature in New York State. The debate proved a futile, although entertaining, affair. Neither of the gentlemen talked long on the main points, which seemed to be whether or not present legislation is strong enough to restrain certain sex publications which are obviously no adornment to the newsstands;

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further, whether or not, if the law were strengthened, it would be a detriment to the advancement of American literature of a more serious nature. These two questions admit of earnest debate. They were obscured by Mr. Boyd's suave periods, termed by his opponent "smoke screens", and by Mr. Sumner's occasionally naive literary estimates. In the course of his statements, Mr. Sumner voiced one sentiment which was received by the none too polite audience with cheers. It was to the effect that he knew nothing about literature, except its ethical side; but that he did know the American Spirit. He further explained that if all publishers of books, magazines, etc., were to stop publication, it would mean little to the American people! Perhaps there is more truth in this exaggerated statement than we should like to believe. Perhaps, after all, the collection and dissemination of knowledge is a fruitless and silly task. Are we any better off than we were before Caxton? Shall we drift back to primitive social conditions? Does Mr. Sumner fancy that his Vice Society would have no ground of operation were there no books? Is publishing worth the while of the few who make books and try to convince the public to buy them, then? In this connection we note a pamphlet issued by the United Religious Book Agency, titled "What, Two Dollars and a Half!" It describes the attempt of a book salesman to convince the wife of a wealthy contractor that two dollars and a half is a reasonable price for a book of travel. It is worth quoting in part; for it unfortunately represents a fairly general attitude in the purchase of books:

"You said, 'What, two dollars and a half!' a moment ago. Did it occur to you that the author had spent years of travel, involving all manner of hardship and adventure, and expended thousands of dollars in preparing himself to write that book — that he invested a long period of painstaking effort in analyzing his notes, preparing his manuscript, and assembling his photographs? Did it occur to you that after the author's work was done, a publisher invested no little time and a very considerable amount of money in making this book worthy of its background; that he then selected the paper, the type, spared no expense in illustrations, and bound the book attractively; that he then advertised it extensively, distributed it to the trade, and now puts *all of these years of travel, the infinite detail of preparation and careful production*, into your hands for 'Two Dollars and a Half'?

"Your husband is a contractor, and knows something about values. Take this book home, tell him what I have said, and ask him if he knows of anything on earth that offers such great value for '*Two Dollars and a Half*'.

"Moreover, this book will give you several delightful evenings in the comfort of *your own home*. Your husband will read it, your mother will read it, your neighbors will borrow it, and, if they return it, you will still have the book — all for '*Two Dollars and a Half!*' This happens to be a book of travel, but all thoughtful books involve an expense of time and research, and effort quite out of proportion to the relatively trivial amounts you and I can buy them for."

## THE JOB HUNTER

THE school teacher in Arkansas sends a letter saying: "I must write. Should I go on teaching school or give up and make the great plunge?" The reporter on a western paper: "Should I come to New York, I seem to get nowhere with creative work here." The high school boy: "What should I plan to do if I want to write, go into a publishing house?" Every day and, literally, at the rate of ten a day, they come in person — undergraduates, recent graduates, women who have educated their families and passed them safely on to marriage — looking for posts as secretaries, pub-

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lishers' readers, reviewers, or just a job where "I can be associated in some way with books, I'm so tired of just ordinary cold business! I want a job, any kind of job, in a publishing or magazine office."

Most of the young women so applying do not know stenography, and ask: "But doesn't stenography hold you back from progress toward better things?"

What is the answer, if any, to all these questioners and questionings? In the first place, there are astonishingly few openings in publishing or magazine offices. In the second place, if you wish to be a writer, you will do just as well to go into a bank or a grocery store. Writers as often develop from physicians as they do from magazine editors. Witness Zane Grey, Joseph Collins, Somerset Maugham! To a young man or a young woman determined to write the answer is: If you can find a job reporting on a newspaper and keep it for a year or two, do so; otherwise, keep the position you have, whatever it is, and write. If you wish to become a magazine editor or a publisher, that and that alone should be your ambition. It is difficult to be both successful publisher or editor and writer. You will find instances of persons who have been able to make this combination with success; but few more than have been both bankers and writers, or candlestick makers and writers. Writing successfully is a vocation in itself.

How to find the opening wedge is another matter. Whatever you do, don't come to New York City looking for a position. In proportion to the number of persons seeking them, they don't exist — and if that statement is incorrect mathematically, it is at least correct for all practical purposes.

## SHERWOOD ANDERSON AND NORA

IN a passage which may be read with various emotions, pages 140–152 of his autobiography, "A Story Teller's Story", Sherwood Anderson relates frankly his conversation with Nora, the chambermaid. "I talked, I am afraid, rather like a Napoleon or a Tamerlane to poor Nora." The conversation was tolerably onesided, Anderson doing approximately all the talking, which bore a general mild resemblance to some of the utterances and reflections of John Webster in Anderson's novel, "Many Marriages".

Whatever one may feel, Anderson's account is not without humor at his own expense; but we were struck by this passage toward the end of the episode:

> And now to my readers I must stop a moment to explain that I speak at length in this way of my conversation with Nora, my triumph with her, as I may I think legitimately call it, because it was a purely literary feat and I am writing, as you know, of the life of a literary man. . . . I had succeeded, you see, by a purely literary trick, in getting myself into Nora's consciousness as in some way connected with her absent lover.

Realizing that the inexpressive Nora might need some outlet, a literary one being denied her, he wisely directed her attention to the fact that a passing workman had stopped outside the door to listen.

> Grabbing the broom in her hand she flew at him screaming with wrath. "Can't we have a little talk, my friend and I, without your sticking in your nose?" she cried, and the workman fled down the hallway with Nora at his heels, striking vigorously at him with the broom.

Thus successfully was terminated a rather delicate affair. But, as we say, Mr. Anderson's point impresses us. We ourselves constantly tend to forget the great variety of the forms of

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literary expression. They are not confined to the written word, not even when inscribed with some risk and extreme impermanence by an airplane on the sky. They are so largely vocal. Noras say it with brooms. Or, at least, partly.

Everybody should be encouraged to literary feats at all times and the idea of literature should be extended and made, as nearly as possible, coextensive with life. But there is too much misdirected literary expression. Her marked vigor, alertness, and finished style did not avail Nora in the face of her initial mistake in choosing the wrong subject.

## ADVENTURE NOVEL AND POET'S DREAM

A POET'S novel does not recommend itself immediately to the attention of the large public that thrills to mystery yarns. The news that John Masefield has written another story does not titillate the palates of Zane Grey readers. Yet "Sard Harker" has been called by critics here and abroad the greatest adventure story published in many years. It is bold, manly, colorful, almost melodramatic. If it does not reach a huge public this year and for many years to come, it will be the fault of someone other than John Masefield. The plot is grotesque, at times absurd. It reminds one quaintly of William Archer's "The Green Goddess". It is a mixture of sea atmosphere, mysticism, and devil worship. Yet Masefield has given simple structure a symphonic twist. He pictures the incurable romanticist seeking his dream through untold difficulties. Sard Harker might have been a knight of King Arthur, following a mad ideal through countless quests. The vision of Margarita is the theme of this symphony of adventure; she comes to Sard in mists and dreams, she is his ideal woman, although he has seen her only once. He knows that she is destiny for him. Like Joseph Hergesheimer, Masefield has always joyed in the portrayal of heroes seeking the ideal. But unlike "Balisand", "Sard Harker" is a story of triumph. Richard Bale's is a life of reminiscence and unrelinquished ideals; Sard Harker beats his way through forest and sea to the success which he commands from life. Masefield's style has never been more vital, not even in "The Widow in the Bye-Street". It is simple at times almost to the point of ugliness, and he does not hesitate to use the sailor's language when he so desires. Yet in several of the great adventure climaxes of the story, the words mount to a fury of ringing poetry; color and sound race together to produce effects of terror, beauty, and passion. The account of Sard's flight through forest and bog is a masterpiece in itself, a piece of descriptive prose that is daring, for it relies on nature alone to produce an effect of breathless excitement. Here, then, for the casual reader is a novel of intense emotion, although it must be added that for some readers there will probably be several short periods of difficult reading. Here, too, is one of the greatest allegories of modern times. Remarkable, too, for its clever concealment. Margarita is the main theme of the symphony; but ideal love and sinful love play against each other in skilful counterpoint. Sard Harker's vision and Raphael Hirsch's lust meet in the great final movement, and the climax sounds with majesty. Compare this novel with any one of Conrad's and it does not fail to impress.

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It is clearer, and it proceeds to its conclusion with firmer intent. "Jim Davis" was a masterpiece of its kind. "Gallipoli" has not yet been outranked as the greatest prose book of the war. "Sard Harker" seems like one of those books which possess eternal proportions. Its robustness has a tang of the eighteenth century. Its beauty challenges the descriptive power of Conrad or of Hardy. Masefield was once hailed by America as a great poet. It is rumored that he will return soon to visit us. We can scarcely fail to greet in his person the great novelist.

## SAFETY IN DANGER

ROCK ribbed conservatism usually faces two opposing forces. The noisiest fighting is made with the left wing of the enemies, where the radicals are stationed. It is in particular between these two parties that the graceful verbal compliments are passed. There is good reason for this peculiarly violent enmity; for, while standing in opposition, the two sects are in the way of being brothers. Conservatism means conformity to our code: radicalism simply offers a different code. Conservatives are taunted for their slavery to persons or customs or constitutions, but radicals appear to offer what is essentially only a more elaborate bondage. In politics, in morals, and in religion, the interesting battle becomes hotter; because the radicals are making a great show of power which stiffens the die-hards. On the right wing of conservatism's enemies stand the liberals, who do not want to get out of the fight but who nevertheless keep edging away from their allies. Their uncertainty accounts for much that is bewildering in our unending social clashes. Liberalism—it seems strange that it should have to be repeated in an age of understanding—holds still the firm conviction that the powers of men are released most effectively in an atmosphere of freedom and that social action should be directed at all times to secure to the individual the practical liberty to say and do and be what he pleases. It dislikes the extension of the powers of the state except under absolute necessity; it resents the attempts of individuals or institutions or legislatures to regulate morals; it looks upon uniformity of religion under societies or creeds as the beginning of spiritual decadence. Though liberalism has stood in the forefront of social reform, it frequently has disappointed its friends by holding back from the enterprise of securing good ends by narrowing the limits of freedom. It recognizes clearly that repression is necessary at times but it would balance every repression by some positive action designed to release creative energy. Radicals and conservatives alike regard liberalism as a dangerous philosophy. They are correct: it is. It involves the difficult and perilous feat of walking a tightrope. In revolutions, political campaigns, heresy hunting, censorship wrangles, in wars of all kinds, it is greatly at a disadvantage as compared to extremists with their compact programs and thrilling slogans. Even now in England and America it is being squeezed to death between contending dogmatisms. But its day will come again. When the disappointing quality of the product of forced conformity is finally revealed, liberalism will again be heard as it reminds the world that true living is adventurous and that the dangerous road is the safe one.

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## ON GENESIS FOLLOWED BY EXODUS

AFTER America has successfully given birth to an author, he naturally goes abroad. If possible, he lives abroad for some time. If this is impossible, he stays as long as he can and goes over again as frequently as possible for as long as he can contrive to stay. He returns home with reluctance, wishing that the quota rule might somehow exclude him.

These statements are exaggerations, but they are not ridiculous exaggerations — a fact which is rather disconcerting. In recent years we have heard no end about the total unsuitability of the United States to be the home of a writer, especially if he be a "creative artist" rather than simply a writer. Well, Spain some years ago was entirely unsuited for Miguel de Cervantes; Russia was simply not fit for Fyodor Dostoyevsky; and London, owing to the climate, is no place for an author at any time.

Of course the fact is that no place or time is unsuitable for anyone who has something to write and the power, latent or active, to write it. It is the business of American authors to transform America, or do their part in its transformation; but neither cries of impotence nor rustication elsewhere will strengthen them to do it.

## TWO SKETCHES

By Harriet Plimpton

### THE CORDWOOD PILE

THE road isn't used any more,
Soft grass fills the ruts and holes,
Tall trees meet above and light drips through
On the road and a pile of wood,
Rotted cordwood cut true and trim —
"William Getchell lived up here a piece —
Always kept a lot of wood on hand.
It's there ready — he won't need it, though."

### PIETY

SHE'S very good, you know, and talks about
*Her* God. Hymns, she sings, as here and there
She dusts. And yet her sharp old lips will suck
The meat from some lascivious jest, and match
It with another while the wrinkles tie
The flesh up hard around her chin. Then next,
She'll shake the rotting bones in someone's tree,
Although the folks have long been dead, and God
Has judged them.

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# VISITING AMERICAN AUTHORS

## By Michael Joseph

ENGLAND must be a terrible disappointment to most of the American authors who visit it. Civilization, democracy, war, the League of Nations — none of these has worn away her arrogant insularity. Yet one would think that authors who had won their spurs in the wide and keenly contested field of American literature would be assured of an appreciative welcome in a country where talent is apparently so scarce that fifty dollars isn't bad remuneration for a short story. And we all know that England's Shakespeare owes almost as much to America as he does to Germany.

Let us admit that English people are inhospitable. (The writer is English; and is privileged to criticize English shortcomings.) Our lack of courtesy and hospitality is illustrated by the following true incident: A certain American author, distinguished in her own country but by a curious freak of chance comparatively unknown in England, wrote to an English acquaintance of good social and literary standing requesting him to arrange for reporters and photographers to meet her as she stepped off the boat, and for a dinner to be held as soon as possible after her arrival at which Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Hardy, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and John Galsworthy were to have the privilege of making her acquaintance. With what I regret to call characteristic English incivility, the arrangements were not made.

It is refreshing to confess that not every visiting American author has been treated with such disrespect. The truth is that American authors visiting England are a very mixed lot. Some are extraordinarily charming, and by their dignity save the faces of many of the undignified members of the fraternity. A case in point comes to my mind. Two American authors happened to coincide at the Hotel Cecil quite recently. One was Albert Payson Terhune, who is more or less entitled, if he wishes, to throw his weight about. Fortunately for the status of American writers Terhune does not wish to throw his weight about, but like a man of great vision and fine art he moves gently and bears the peculiarities of the English with tolerance and a sweetness that has made him a first favorite in this country. Incidentally, he has done himself no financial injury in this way. His short stories, particularly his animal stories, are doing famously. But there he was in the Cecil, entirely unlike other American guests, retiring and self contained. He was willing to be seen but very unwilling to talk — about himself. On almost anything under the sun except himself he was not only willing to talk but was extraordinarily well informed, as is to be expected. Another author, who probably has an equal standing in the world of letters, was at the hotel at the same time.

Now, there is dancing at the Cecil, and in the politer places of England



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access to the ballroom is denied those people who will not pay to the ladies the compliment of slipping into a dinner jacket or full evening dress. Our other American author — may we be forgiven if we withhold his name — perhaps has not traveled very much. In a lounge suit cut somewhere in Bleecker Street, with the trousers narrow and tight fitting, the jacket shoulders a work of Herculean inspiration, and a vent reaching somewhere near the middle of his back, he stalked by the footman at the door, despite the footman's quiet hint that the ballroom was reserved for people in evening dress, and by virtue of his eminence took possession of a reserved table whose rightful possessors at the moment were dancing. The footman followed him and again repeated his suggestion, but our author replied, "Hm, doncher know me? I'm — " It would be unfortunate to complete his sentence, but it is illuminative to give his next: "I have been all over Europe and I have never yet submitted to any of your silly regulations, and, believe me, I don't intend to start now. Getcher manager." While the manager was being requisitioned, our author was joined by a group of young ladies who held high court and upheld our (your) man of letters with more enthusiasm than decorum, but they all trooped out like a Sunday School class when the manager had his say. Things like that do not advance the prestige of American letters in a sticky old place like England.

Of course there is a certain amount of allowance to be made — methods differ. A New England lady blew into the London office of a man who figures quite importantly in the commercial side of literature and gave him a few pointed remarks concerning his profession, ending up with a request that he inform her what was the sale of "The Ladies' Home Journal" in America. It was not so much the fact that she asked the question, but the way in which she said it.

Lady to Agent: "I don't trust agents."

Agent: "Surely you are not under the impression that I am a publisher?"

Lady: "No, I know what you are, but I wanted to find out what was the circulation of 'The Ladies' Home Journal', and I think you can tell me. I am ——. It will save me a lot of bother if you will give me that information."

Fortunately, the agent was a diplomat. The literary entente survives such minor lapses from grace.

I have so far resisted the temptation to amuse myself by describing some of the antics of that hardy annual, the author of "Main Street" and "Babbitt", who is perhaps the most discussed American author who has visited England. Justly in a class by himself, he fulfils the average Briton's crude comic paper idea of America by being ready to argue about anything from evolution to bath salts at a moment's notice. One would give half the world, if one owned it all, to have had Sinclair Lewis in company with Oliver Wendell Holmes. There ought to be a campaign of education for best sellers. Sinclair Lewis has his only one real grouch, and that is that the Bible has got such a long start on him; otherwise he is confident that his sales would exceed the sales of the Bible in the course of the next few months.

The story is going round — in justice I admit it may be untrue — that Lewis intended to meet and was determined to meet every author whose sales warranted his acquaintance. Some

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peaceful, meek authors submitted, capitulated at once. George Moore was rather hard to get at. Still Lewis accomplished the almost impossible. He breezed up to Ebury Street in a taxicab with his companion — secretary — and everything else, whom he sent to spy out the land for the great author, and the omnibus companion somehow managed to get near the sage of Ebury Street and to announce with due ceremony that Mr. Lewis was downstairs in a taxicab and was quite willing to meet Mr. Moore; that if Mr. Moore would wait still a minute Mr. Lewis would be up. Mr. Lewis came up, but history does not proceed beyond that point. Yet one forgives such refreshing enthusiasm.

Quite the other kind of American is Florence Irwin, who came over to play a few rubbers of bridge. Perhaps it is not fair to authors generally or it may be unfair to Mrs. Irwin to put her in the purely literary circle, but she has a distinct ability to write in a manner pleasing to the English, and she is a personality herself capable of accepting the English as they are, and not making too much of a song about her own prowess and her own prejudices. But the fact remains that she got into the hearts of the English public, and was happily welcomed in all the clubs, sometimes enjoying the rare distinction of being the only woman permitted to enter the charmed circle.

A real point worth remembering is that England is such a poor country that £660,000 of gold could never be transported through the streets. It is beyond our comprehension; and when sales reach the hundreds of thousands, we somehow sit back and say, "Well, it is the Lord's doing and couldn't be done without America." So these things become miracles and we treat them as miracles with appropriate reverence. It hurts us a little occasionally to see what sort of stuff the miracles are made of, but that is the essence of a miracle, a wonderful result from cakes and codfish.

There are writers like Irvin S. Cobb — most retiring and welcome of humorists, who adopts the Savoy Hotel as a temporary home when in Europe — H. L. Mencken, and Fannie Hurst, who add to the gaiety of old England. There is another class of visitor — the younger American writer who comes unobtrusively, stays to learn, and returns to profit by what he has seen and heard.

To these I would add a fourth class, consisting of writers who are today so busy influencing America's literary future that they have not yet gazed on Father Thames from a window of the Savoy Hotel. Among these last are Sherwood Anderson, Floyd Dell, Edgar Lee Masters whose "Spoon River Anthology" England ranks close up beside "Leaves of Grass", and Theodore Dreiser. These writers of what Waldo Frank has called "The New America" have not been to discover London, or if they have, came as ordinary tourists and did not permit London to discover them. Yet in some respects these are the very men who above all others should come to see us — we know them for 100% Americans who are creating new traditions in an almost new land, and we admire them as pioneers. They would find in us much of that very literary tradition they are seeking to create in their own land. I mention them here because only their insularity of thought has kept them in their own land for so long when Europe is anxious to say "How do".

If the self impressed school of American authors must travel for

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the good of their country, could it be possible to convey to them the needlessness of a constant effort to talk like Heywood Broun, B. L. T., or Morley, unless at the same time they behave as those gentlemen would? The English have no delight in unrestrained exuberance, but they delight, if quietly, exceedingly in the exquisite humor that is at home in America, and unfortunately seems to stay at home.

This grouch against some visiting American authors contrasts churlishly with the generous hospitality which America extends indiscriminately to English authors who cross the Atlantic. But the pill of criticism is handed out in the jam of hospitality, and although some English authors in America are treated with the respect that is their due, others receive the disrespect to which they are undoubtedly entitled. Burton Rascoe and a few other columnists make moderately (immoderately?) fair game of them and English authors have had considerable publicity devoted to their private life and habits in the United States. The essential difference between American and English custom — and one which I readily admit balances in American favor — is that while America is critical she is also lavishly hospitable; whereas England is critical (although perhaps not so aggressively) but frigidly inhospitable.

Still, what can you expect of a country where intelligent people have never even heard of Willa Cather and have vague ideas that Edith Wharton is a film actress and James Branch Cabell a senator? When our indifference is probed and someone treads on our old world corns with nasty new American boots, we scowl at him. We can't help it — it's just our little way.

## IN A MILLIONAIRE'S LIBRARY

By Richard Butler Glaenzer

SAID the curator: "He has gathered here
All of the sages Robert Burton quoted
And half the lore on which de Bury doted
In 'Philobiblon'. An auctioneer
Would estimate a million not too dear
For his rare incunabula, all noted
For their condition. Quaritch has voted
Flawless each Aldine, Grolier, Elzevir."

I left him droning, wandered round the room
Lined with its solemn, air tight, glass shelved cases.
Somehow they looked like coffins in a tomb,
The books transmogrified to mummied faces.
A flapper's giggled comment broke the spell:
"I'll say he *reads* Corelli, Wright, and Dell!"

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# THE ONE GOLD COIN

## By Michael Arlen

*With Sketches by Dwight Taylor*

I

AND Robins opened a thick white door, and within the door was a great lacquer screen, as though to preserve eternal the amenities of a room of the first importance.

"Captain Spain, your Grace", said Robins.

Now it was that pale moment of an autumn day when the curtains are not yet drawn against the failing light, when the lamps are not yet lit, and the newly replenished fire burns like a flashy young man, little blue and yellow flames walking quickly up and down the proud shining coals; and he who listens intently may hear the heart of the world beating with sonorous strokes, like a man singing in a cellar. From the shadows of the room came a low sweet voice that had somehow a funny little tremble at its roots.

"Basil, you are very kind to come and see an old woman: when, I daresay, there are so many more amusing ways for a young man to pass a rainy afternoon. Sit here, sit here. My eyes are tired, and I can't see far."

"I am so sorry you're tired, Duchess. Are you sure you can bear with me today?"

"If you will not be clever, boy. Besides, didn't I ask you to come? Robins, we will have tea. Or would you prefer a whisky and soda, Basil, because of the rain? No? And, Robins, I am not at home, remember. Basil, do I look very worn that you look at me so anxiously?"

"You do too much, you give of yourself too much, that's what it is, Duchess", wisely said Captain Spain, and the Duchess smiled a little at his young wisdom, for she had lived a long time and all wisdom seemed to her youthful, knowing as she did that, while there is no beginning to wisdom in this world, there is no end to folly. Meanwhile the young man let himself into a low chair beside the divan on which she lay, and she no more than two tired gentle eyes and a long thin body, so long and so thin.

As always she was in black, today in a loose black gown, soft and softly shining, for the Duchess of Galt had never worn but black since the death of her two sons in the war. Basil Spain had been her eldest son's greatest friend, and a great friendship that had been, and a great death it had died at the massacre of Passchendaele; but the memory of her beloved son was not the only reason why the Duchess was so fond of Basil, for Basil, she thought, was a young man of talent, invention, and quite high intent: and, while admitting that his novels were not yet the most important things in the world, she maintained that they were very entertaining and held great promise. Never, of course, would she permit him to present her with one



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of his books, saying, and saying sensibly, that if an author's friends did not buy his books how would he make a living at all?

"It rains, oh dear how it rains!" now sighed the Duchess, raising herself on an elbow the better to allow a very thin, very long, very white hand to flutter like a timid bird about the tea table, the while Captain Spain, having eaten one tomato sandwich, was experimenting with another. Nor is that verb used thoughtlessly, for although there are not more than two bites to a tomato sandwich of this sort, these two must be carefully arranged, else the tomato will evade the occasion, a mess will ensue, and then where are you?

Now Captain Spain, who was a young man sensitive to atmosphere (as was proper in one who had exchanged the sword for the pen), felt that he was not expected to talk much, and so, trying to be good, he did not talk at all. Furtively, then, he looked at the Duchess, for he admired her very much, and was often wishing that the young women of his time had something of her poise and sweet, sad dignity. Ah yes, she was sad, because of the swords that had pierced her heart, once and twice and again and again. Though, indeed, the familiars of her youth had told him that Monica Galt, even at the height of her beauty's fame, never was a light-headed woman, for all that she carried her lovely ivory head so lightly, for all her gaieties and her follies and her what nots.

The quiet agony of her heart! You see, the Duchess was once very powerful in the land, she had a place in the minds of governors; but the war had killed her power, and the war had killed her two dear sons, and then the new England had turned away from all that she and her like were and stood for. It was not for nothing that a wise man said that when England won the war she defeated her aristocrats; and with the realization of the defeat of her kind was thrown yet another sword into the heart of Monica Galt. As for the Duke, that casual and debonair man had deserted her many a year before, though only in fact and not in law, for even Roderick Galt was not entirely insensible to the traditions that had set his unworthy feet on the narrow path of example, unlike some dukes we hear of nowadays.

"How I wish", said Basil Spain at last — for can a man stay silent forever? — "how I wish I could think that of all London, of all the world, you had chosen me to come and sit beside you on a rainy afternoon!"

"Think it," she begged, "think it! And smoke, please."

"But I can't help a suspicion, Duchess, that you have asked me for a purpose, that you have a use for me. My attractions, enormous though they may be to the frivolous, have not really weighed with you in asking me to tea today. Well, I am glad you have a use for me, indeed I am. You do know that, don't you?"

"Yes, I do", came the small, slightly husky voice. "And I know, too, that under that funny hard phraseology of yours, under your commas and colons and conceits, under your man-of-the-world and successful-young-novelist air, you hide a very soft heart. Now don't you? Confess, Basil." And so she mocked him, and he grew shy, thinking of the secret tears he had wept and of the plausible laughs he had laughed in public, because of the vainest vanity of vanities, which is the desire of a man to appear other than he is.

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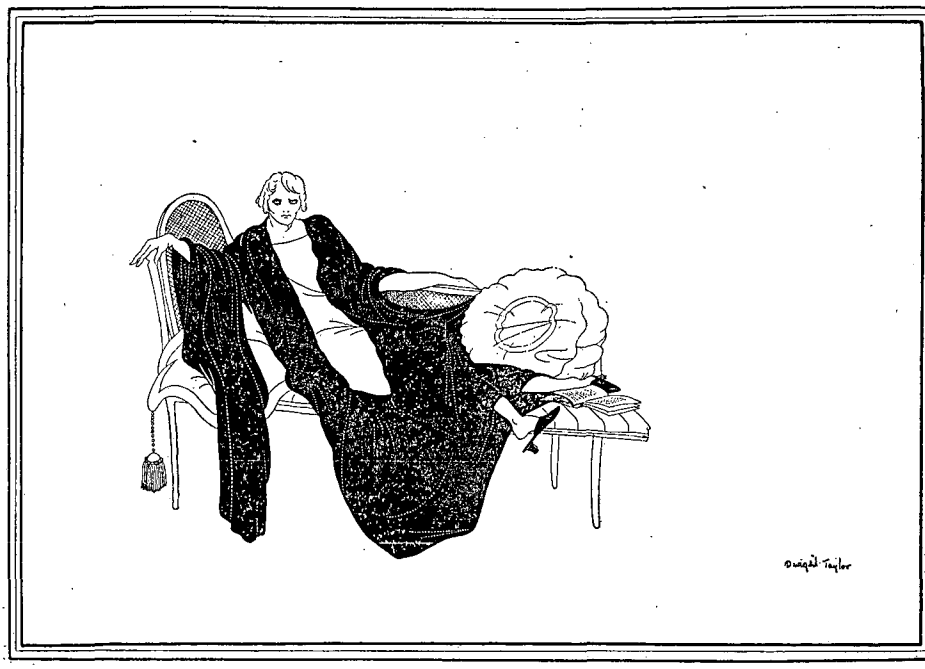

*"As always she was in black"*

"And chivalry, Basil? In your heart you are very chivalrous, aren't you? Confess, Basil."

But, behind a screen of cigarette smoke, youth raised the greenery-yallery flag and waved it defiantly.

"A word, Duchess!" said he. "This chivalry!"

"Oh, Basil!" she said, and gravely she shook her small head from side to side, so that the white curls trembled like voiceless bells against her cheeks. "Chivalry is much, much more than a word, boy. It is the noble folly."

So rebuked, and rightly, Basil Spain threw the tattered flag to limbo, and said earnestly:

"I would like to serve you in anything you wish, Duchess. Please ask me. It would make me very happy."

She thanked him in that small husky voice, and thoughtfully passed a hand over her hair, a pretty, boyish gesture that came to her when she was thinking very deeply.

"You are right, Basil, there is a service I want from you, but you must do it with your heart as well as your head, for not even a cavalier's head, Basil, can serve a lady so well as a page boy's heart. And now, my dear, I will at once contradict myself by adding that you will need all your wits about you this night, and all your impudence, and all your nimble ideas and cunning words; and for courage there'll be some demand, too.

"My life has been a very full one, Basil, and it may be that there are those who regard it as a successful one. But I have lived to see my fate fulfilled, that's what I have done, and my fate was to be nothing and to leave nothing. I do not wish to be socio-

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logical, dear, but there is no room for my kind in this present world. And so, because everything else, love of husband and comradeship of children, usefulness to my country and responsibility of position — because all these things that have mattered to me have been taken away from me by time and circumstance, I have had to come to the counting of my memories.

"Now I will tell you the correct procedure as to the counting of memories, so that when you are a million years old you too will know how it is done. I take them, Basil, from a secret drawer of my mind. They are, shall we say, coins. Coin by coin, I take them out, I weigh them in my hand, and then I drop them into the deep bowl of my knowledge. I listen, and by their ring in the bowl I know them to be true or base — and many are base, Basil, which is a way memories have. And then one day my fingers stretched ever so deep into the drawer and touched the coin that was made almost at the beginning — and that was a golden coin, Basil, of a purity that appalled the base imagination of the King of counterfeiters. But even as I held it in my hand, my one gold coin, there came a person into the world who wanted to take it from me and throw that, too, into the mud. Isn't that pathetic, Basil! Let the head of a cavalier laugh, but will the heart of a cavalier allow such a thing to happen?"

And Basil said that it wouldn't, there was no question about it.

"Good, good! A man may not now wear a shield, but he may still die for a brave device. Now listen, and I will tell you an ancient tale. It is such an ancient tale, Basil, that you would not dare to write it unless you could think of a queer twist to put at the end of it, for nowadays, ever since Mr. O. Henry lived and died, everyone wants queer twists to things.

"I was married when I was eighteen, and I married, dear, for love's sake. Never was a luckier girl than I, in her coming out year to make the greatest match of her time, and to love and be loved. And so, Basil, you can easily imagine that in those prehistoric times there was a very happy girl in the world. But alas! she was not in the world at all, she was in a world of dreams and fantasies, a world of knights and fairies, and in this world her husband was the most reproachless knight of all and she, for whom he would die if need be, was a slim young goddess on a marble column. Oh, I was so innocent then, you wouldn't believe!

"But there is an end to all things, and so there was an end to that first fine innocence — I'm sure it was fine, dear, even though it did bore my husband — and I came to realize that the world is an unsafe walk for a lover, that there are pits awaiting trusting feet, and that at journey's end there is only Heartbreak House for solace. My young husband grew tired of his silly young wife, Basil, and what wonder, when you think how very boring I must have been, with my romancings here and hero worshipings there! And when I realized his unlovingness, the way he would look at me so impatiently when I came into a room, I must have grown more tiresome than ever, my eyes changing in a night and a day from a high adoration to the desperate bravery of a corpse singing a hymn; and I would look at him, Basil, with a bright smile — oh dear, a *bright* smile! — as though to show him that I realized he was not casting me from his house only for pity's sake; and so, what with one thing and another, the poor boy got so bored that

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he scarcely knew which way to turn, except that he simply must turn in any direction away from me, which he did by packing me off to Welvoir, while he went off to kill something somewhere.

"Of all our properties I think I have loved Welvoir Castle best, and I was so sorry when we had to sell it to some people who could afford to live in it. Did you ever stay with me at Welvoir, Basil? Oh, you would have adored it, so old and all-over-the-place it is, but I am afraid I can't describe it more definitely, for I never can describe anything. But it isn't Welvoir I want to bring to your notice so much as a crumbling grey wall. Now it is very important, Basil, that crumbling grey wall, and I would be grateful if you would keep it in your mind until you receive notice to the contrary. Yes, that will do nicely.

"This crumbling grey wall had somehow got itself entangled with a corner of the park just where the park became the private property of one of our tenants. I didn't like that tenant at all, Basil. He was a retired Indian colonel, and he looked just like it, the way he would glare at me as I walked by the crumbling grey wall — and what else had I to do but walk by crumbling grey walls, and sit on them, and dream on them, with Roderick Galt carrying white men's burdens up and down dark places? And so I stuck to my wall, colonel or no colonel, and one day he fell ill and glared at me no more. And another day, as I walked by there, I saw a young man on the other side, and at that time, Basil Spain, I was just twenty three years old, whereas now I am fifty eight. . . .

"This young man had a gun and a dog, and he was tall and lean, and he had on the foulest tweed suiting I had ever seen on anyone except my father, who was a divine man, but dead. Now, Basil, there are more important things in the world than tweed suitings, but not very many. An Englishman of my day with a gun and dog in a new tweed suiting was a phenomenon that would have revolted a countryside. Yes. But this young man's tweeds, my dear, were not just decently dirty, as yours might be — they were monstrous, and I couldn't help it, I just stared. It reminded me so of my father, you see, who was dead, and how he would walk about with guns and dogs in the foulest of old clothes — but showing from the turned up sleeves the whitest of white linen. This young man's linen was like that, too, and if it hadn't been there wouldn't be the one gold coin among all my memories, and I wouldn't be boring you now. Oh dear, how silly I am getting! But it's true, you know, what I've just said. Dirty tweeds — good. But without frightfully clean linen — no gold coin.

"Oh, how shy I was! But I managed to call out, as it was the duty of the *châtelaine* to do:

"'How is your father today?' For I was quite sure, you see, that he was the old colonel's son.

"'Eh?' he said. 'Eh!' But he said more than that later on, I promise you he did, and I listened. How I listened!

"His father, he managed to say as he approached his side of the wall, gun and dog and monstrous tweeds, his father wasn't any better. 'He'll die, I shouldn't wonder', he added, and I said I was sorry, and then we were both quite silent, and then we both said at exactly the same moment what a nice day it was, and then he said he had only arrived the night before, and that he loved this part of

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the country, and I said I did, too, though I'm afraid no one had noticed it until then. And then we talked. He talked. He was an engineer, and engineers, it seems, don't get much time for talking, and so he had a good deal to say. About himself, of course, for he was a young engineer, just about my age.

"We talked, the lean young man with the purposeful dark eyes and I. He was as arrogant as a sword, the way he flashed his dark eyes on me and said this is this and that is that, and he was ambitious, and he loved his job, which was to build bridges in foreign parts. But I cannot tell you what it was we talked about all that first afternoon, I have forgotten.

"He was very strange to me, this young man. There he stood, with his gun and his dog, and I wondered when he was going off to his shooting, and then I realized that here was the first Englishman I had ever met who would allow a woman to interfere with his sport! That thrilled me, Basil, and can you wonder, when you think of what a woman has to put up with from salmon, rabbits, grouse, and lions?

"All the time, of course, I hadn't a doubt he knew who I was, not that I was anything at all, God knows; but I realized he hadn't an idea when it somehow came out that I was the *châtelaine* of the castle. He blushed furiously, and he looked angrily at the landscape, because, you see, he had been talking away like anything, and was afraid I had been making a fool of him. A duchess to him was a woman one couldn't be comfortable with, but I was ever so clever, Basil, and when we both went our way from the crumbling grey wall in the evening I think he had rather changed his mind about that. Anyhow, he was there the next afternoon, gun, dog, and monstrous tweeds, and I liked him for not having put on cleaner ones. Yes, I liked him. You see, he was the first man who had ever talked to me. . . .

"Day by day, we met by that crumbling grey wall, and we sat on it, and we talked, but always he had his gun and his dog, as though to say the real business of the afternoon would begin later, but it never did. And the rest of his time he spent with his old father, who was dying.

"That is all, Basil. I am so sorry to disappoint you, dear, but that was all. You see, with some people, not very clever people, marriage is a fact, and that fact having once become part of their lives, no man but God can make them evade the inevitability of it. There was just no question with me about any alternative to Roderick Galt. I have always been a Roman Catholic at heart, Basil, and that is very different from being a Puritan, who are chaste people, but with no knowledge of unchastity, only suspicions. But to be a Roman Catholic at heart means that you are chaste and yet have a deep knowledge of unchastity, and that is a hell, Basil, which your generation has done well to avoid.

"We were both too terribly in love, I think, to do any of the little things. Yes, we were both terribly in love, but did we say a word about it? No, Basil, and if this was a tale out of a book I would say that neither knew the other was in love, but the truth is he knew and I knew that but for the fact I was already married I would have married him there and then, and I would have gone to the end of the world with him, and he would have broken his heart earning luxuries for me, and we would have been such a pair of lovers as the world has never

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yet seen, men and women being what they are.

"He was my knight, and I was his lady, the crumbling grey wall our pleasance and the sun our good friend. But unlike you, Basil Spain, I was never the captain of my life, and so the days went coiling on to weave a martyred memory, while his old father was dying, not because there was anything special the matter with him but because a man must die sometime.

"And then he died completely; and while the light of our good friend the sun clamored for love words, my knight and I sat for the last time silently on our grey wall, staring into the little wind that played about with the early autumn leaves. No, I was never the captain of my life . . . and he, my dear, who was as strong as gold, would not use his strength to seduce his beloved from an allegiance she couldn't voluntarily surrender. That was a man, I tell you! And, oh dear, what a lover for any woman his equal. . . .

"He went; and I have not seen him since. From Welvoir, with the little bits of money his father had left him, he went to South America. 'I wonder,' he had said, 'if you will write to me.' And I had said, 'I wonder!'

"Now here at last, Basil, is the matter of my tale. Poor boy, you must have been very bored so far — but wasn't one of the less irritating of other people's epigrams in your last book to the effect that no man worth his while is ever bored by a woman's indiscretions about her emotions?

"I wrote to him, week by week, sometimes day by day. I think they must have been love letters, though how am I to know, for I had never written any before and I have never written any since? I simply can't imagine how I found material for all those letters! I think they must have been just about the little things I did, of horses and foxes and rain, and of my hopes for him, my ambitions for him, and maybe there was here and there a shy suggestion of a broken heart and a long despair. He wrote back, not so profusely, and mainly about bridges, of which there seemed to be a great lack in South America, though why they should need them there at all I don't know, for all South Americans seem to live in Cannes and Deauville. I have his letters now, but I cannot bear to read old letters, it is like looking into the eyes of a blind man.

"Then, his letters quite ceased. The last I had came from Panama, whither he had gone on the Lesseps adventure, and so I thought he must have died of the swamps; but I inquired, and his name was not among the dead. So I blessed him, and I admired his wisdom in saying to himself that there must be an end to all things . . . but I did not know, Basil, that the end was to be delayed for thirty four years, nor that the end was to be in a slaughter house.

"Basil, there are many bad men in the world, but the worst of them all is a man called Nathaniel Berridge. As you know, I hate saying beastly things about anybody, but this Mr. Berridge must, without even the exaggeration pardonable to my distress, be a man corrupt and loathsome beyond description. During the war he somehow managed to get himself appointed to one of my hospital committees, but a dingy breath of his financial past came to my ears, and I had him expelled quickly, quickly, without even seeing him. Mr. Berridge, it seemed, took this to heart, and swore vengeance.

"You are aware, of course, of the fortunes that have been made of late years by vulgar memoir writers. Now

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Mr. Berridge has a bureau on the ground floor of his house in Bedford Square; and there, in steel boxes neatly labeled, are letters of famous or notorious or social people, which Mr. Berridge has been collecting for ever so long. He takes, I believe, a great pride in them: and is always willing to pay a considerable sum for any new acquisition to this collection. Most of his business on that side is, of course, done with servants: while on the other it is done with the lower sort of publishers and memoir writers. They go to him when they are writing about such and such a time or 'set' or what they call the 'smart crowd', and if Mr. Berridge can oblige them with any private letters dealing with the people he gets a royalty on the sale of the book. But he is a man of means, I believe, and does these things as much for a hobby as for the money.

"Basil, this man has somehow or other got hold of my letters to the young knight! Basil, can you imagine the unclean horror of it! Do you realize that they are shortly going to be published as the 'spiciest' item of a 'spicy' book — dear Heaven, was Marie Antoinette entirely wrong to call the people for whom such words are used '*canaille*'! — and that this book is going to be called 'The Souls of Yesterday' by 'A Gentleman with a Vacuum Cleaner'.

"You must not think that it's a question of blackmail. There isn't anything in the letters of which I am ashamed — no, I am proud rather than ashamed of them. There is nothing in them which will reveal me as a woman with a past, and so it is not for any fear of my reputation that I shudder at their publication. But the vulgarity of it, my darling, the vulgarity! Poor Colonel Repington was bad enough, with his luncheons and dinners and little bits of common gossip about people who knew him very slightly, but at least he was just a harmless old gentleman who wanted to make a little pocket money — maybe so as to pay for his own luncheons and dinners, which I am afraid is what he has to do now, poor dear.

"But this Berridge man, he would rob me of my one gold coin — Basil Spain, did you ever hear of anything so wretched? For what joy, what sweetness, will there ever be in a memory that has been so vulgarly used! It is indeed a base thing, Basil, that Mr. Berridge is doing, to rob a child of her only toy, and if God was looking as carefully at England as He looked at Sodom and Gomorrah, just to see what improvements He could effect, it would be Woe and Woe to Mr. Berridge, wouldn't it?

"Basil, listen. I want my letters from that loathly man because my life now is like that crumbling grey wall I begged you to make a note of, and because on that crumbling grey wall there is just one gold coin, where that young knight and I sat and talked and suffered ancient things. Go, Basil, and fetch me those letters from that man. If my sons, your friends, were alive, they would help me. They will help you even now. It is not right, Basil, it is not just, that these letters should be given to the people who made of Horatio Bottomley a god. Go, boy, and get them for me tonight. It will be no use, I am afraid, offering him money. Heaven knows we are not rich now, but my lawyers did manage to offer him two hundred pounds for them, but he was good enough to say that two thousand would not be enough. He wants to hurt me, that man — I, whom he has never even seen! Somehow, he must



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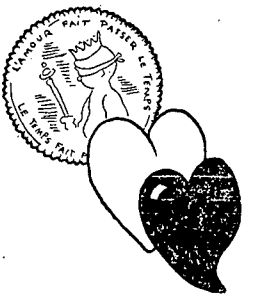
have guessed that I treasure the memory of what those letters represent, and he just wants to hurt me. Ah, *quel sale type!* You must not fail, you cannot fail! Teach that man reverence, Basil Spain — reverence for the decencies which, maugre the writers and readers of low memoirs, maugre the corrupt geniality of our time, and with the help of men like you, shall be as undying as youth. Go, Basil, and I will bless you always."

*(To be concluded in February.)*




## RAIN

By Therese Lindsey

THE rain has washed my soul white and tasteless.
I sit limp and draggled fancying the wetness
Trickling behind my ears.
Rain, rain, measured, monotonous.
The garden things cringe wearily,
And cup their leaves rusty with grit.
The birds are silent and so am I.
How can I sing or forget death
While I hear the rattle in the throat of the gutter,
While the sky sets me her gloomy example
Holding her grim apron between me and the sun?

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# CHICAGO — OUR LITERARY CRATER

## By Llewellyn Jones

A CERTAIN critic once remarked that Chicago was the literary centre of the United States. Chicago took the compliment very seriously, never thinking that it might have been intended to run only during the time the eminent critic was in the city — a matter of a week or so. But at that time — I think it was four years ago — Chicago could make quite a boast of itself as a centre of literary activity. Miss Monroe's "Poetry" had done fine pioneer work in giving the new men a hearing: Carl Sandburg, Edgar Lee Masters, and Vachel Lindsay — though he was in Springfield, a few miles away — had attained international recognition. There was a large group of younger poets, rapidly gaining attention: Maxwell Bodenheim, Mark Turbyfill, Eunice Tietjens, Margery Swett (now business manager of "Poetry"). Mr. Masters had already begun to publish novels. Henry Blake Fuller had recently issued his two latest works of fiction — and some time before that he had very unexpectedly given us a volume of free verse, "Long Lines and Short". Ben Hecht's first novel had appeared, to be followed by three others and by a play. Howard Vincent O'Brien was shortly to become, for a time, a best seller with "Gold". Over in Evanston Henry Kitchell Webster was writing both serious novels and best sellers. Bookstores were springing up at every corner in Chicago, and the waiters at Schlogl's were becoming dizzy from circling the large round table at which the local literati gathered Saturday noons.

What has happened since then? Well, if it is not quite correct to say that

All, all, are gone, the old familiar faces

it is at least true to say that they are going. One scans the ranks and murmurs:

> Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
> Beneath the bosom of the sea
> Wand'ring in many a coral grove,
> Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry!
>
> How have ye left the ancient love
> The bards of old enjoy'd in you!
> The languid strings do scarcely move!
> The sound is forc'd, the notes are few!

That of course is an exaggeration: the whole Nine have not left. But within the last two or three years there have been the following desertions from the literary ranks:

Sherwood Anderson has left us for New Orleans, which port he reached via Reno and California.

Edgar Lee Masters has left us, apparently for good, and is living in New York (the state, not the city), although he still writes about Spoon River.

Ben Hecht has left us for at least a year. He is now press agent for Horace Liveright's production of Edwin J. Mayer's play, "The Firebrand". A New York lady who heard that remarked, "Oh, then he'll be here a couple of weeks, won't he?" Mean, wasn't it? But he's still there!

And Maxwell Bodenheim, after a sojourn in Chicago in which he helped



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Mr. Hecht to produce his Chicago "Literary Times" — now translated to eternity — has also gone back to New York.

Professor Sherman, of Urbana, perhaps hardly counted as a Chicagoan but he was near enough to shed a sobering and anti-romantic influence over midwest criticism. Now he is no longer Professor Sherman of the University of Illinois but the literary editor of the New York "Herald-Tribune". At least, he has the title, but I am told that Mrs. Irita Van Doren actually makes up the forms each week, Mr. Sherman being too much of a gentleman to use the necessary profanity in conference with the makeup man. And meanwhile — showing how the law of compensation works — while this scholar deserts the professorial chair for the newspaper desk, a Chicago literary editor who never went to college has taken service with two universities as a teacher.

Vincent Starrett, essayist, poet, and short story writer, has gone east and intends, I believe, to live for a time in England.

Such are the desertions that have thinned our local ranks. Whom have we left, and who will fill the vacant places? Well, Carl Sandburg is still with us, and will soon have a new book out — prose this time. And Henry B. Fuller still remains, but he is now writing criticism exclusively and is reported to have said that he will not at present write any more novels. I repeat this subject to corrections. Harry Hansen, the editor of my favorite book page — next to my own (and some people even like it better) — and the author of "Midwest Portraits", is still laboring in our vineyard, although I am told that the effort incident to his radio talks is preventing him from writing another book. And Keith Preston is still periscoping and columning in the "Daily News".

Harriet Monroe has lately published a new collection of her poems, an interesting book, not only for the later poetry of its author but because she has prefaced this with her famous "Columbian Ode" read at the opening of the World's Fair and written about a world which the poet — like all idealists — saw in the future, through a clear air which has since been darkened by the clouds of war. Some of the later poems deal sharply with the contrast between the visions of that earlier day and the disillusionments of this. "The Difference and Other Poems" is published by the Hyman-McGee company, one of the new Chicago publishing ventures.

As for the vacant places, they will hardly, at present, be filled. In poetry there are two events to record. Dorothy Dow scored quite a success last year with her "Black Babylon", which has already gone into a second edition. And, at least locally, there was quite a little excitement over the publication of "The King of the Black Isles" by J. U. Nicolson, who followed it shortly with another book of verse, "The Sainted Courtezan". Mr. Nicolson is a Swinburnian and wears seven league boots. When Miss Monroe accuses him of using romantic clichés and outworn splendors instead of singing of the things close at hand, he replies in a sonnet that he is against "the Monroe doctrine".

We have at least one and perhaps two new novelists of note to record. The first is Bernard de Voto who teaches at Northwestern and who has just published "The Crooked Mile", a realistic story laid in Utah but not dealing with the Mormon question or the purity of the American home. The second — but since he

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is now in New York I hesitate to claim him for Chicago — is Glenway Wescott. His first novel, "The Apple of the Eye", is indubitably a work of genius.

Another Chicago writer who may repay watching is Helen Swift, whose first book, "Where Green Lanes End", came out early in the year. This writer's nature sketches are at once interesting and free from sentimentality, and two of the stories in the book dealing with human character have been starred by O'Brien.

Altogether, perhaps, the gains do not yet balance the losses. On the other hand, Chicago is making one of its far between efforts to get itself on the publishing map. I do not know how many efforts it has made in the past, but I know that in the Eighteen Nineties it made quite a feverish one. In those days we had "The Chap-Books" printed here, and the publishing house of Stone and Kimball was the American publisher of Bernard Shaw. At the same time Messrs. Way and Williams were actually importing Kelmscott Press books. But the activity died out, and for years A. C. McClurg and Company, Reilly and Britton — later Reilly and Lee — and Rand McNally — a specialized house doing little general work — and Forbes and Company were the only publishers in Chicago to speak of.

Recently, however, the new firm of Covici-McGee, by a process of fission — as we see it in the more elementary forms of life — gave rise to two newer publishing houses — the Hyman-McGee Company and Pascal Covici. The former house is now doing a general business, and Pascal Covici issues limited editions in luxurious and sometimes unconventional formats. Curiously enough, both houses are planning to issue in America the work of one of the best of contemporary English poets, T. Sturge Moore. Hyman-McGee has already published his fine narrative and philosophical poem, "Judas", and will follow it by other volumes, while Mr. Covici is preparing to issue a volume of selected poems.

Meanwhile the burden of keeping up — so to call it — our literary life falls upon the younger generation. There still is Schlogl's of course, and I imagine that Harry Hansen and Dr. Morris Fishbein keep up their attendance pretty religiously. But the only other literary and artistic gathering I know of is the Friday evening meeting of the Younger Artists, a group of writers and painters first brought together by Sam Putnam, coauthor with Mark Turbyfill of "Evaporation", and including Pearl Andelson — whose first book "Fringe" contains some very beautiful and very short poems — and a number of other poets some of whom have first volumes to their credit and some of whom so far have depended on the magazines for their public. The University of Chicago group of poets has initiated a new poetry magazine, "The Forge", in which their own work appears side by side with that of contributors from the outer world — among them a number of well known poets. Its editorial board includes Bertha Ten Eyck James, winner of the Fiske Prize for the best poem by an undergraduate of the university, and George Dillon and Gladys Cromwell. It compares favorably with the other poetry magazines and has a most catholic policy.

However, "The Forge", despite its name, is hardly heavy enough to serve for the peroration of such an article as this. There ought to be some material meet for that purpose. Yet there doesn't seem to be. Not so good, is it?

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# THE LITERARY CLINIC

*An examination of love, hardy perennial of literary themes*

## By Joseph Collins

LOVE is older than man; he flowed from it with the directness of the brook from a spring. It is not astonishing that love, the origin and the source of all animate things, should occupy so much of our thoughts and absorb such a large part of our time. Heroic deeds are committed daily in the name of love; masterpieces are accomplished for love; wars have been prompted by it; torment, exile, disgrace, solitude, death, are accepted when they serve to enhance it. Were it not for love, the world would be without beauty, our lives without purpose; Wagner would not have composed "Tristan and Isolde"; the Venus of Milo would not have been sculped; Leonardo would not have painted Mona Lisa; Shakespeare would not have written "Cleopatra"; all the fine arts would be unknown; men and women would live like animals, for love is one of the few possessions humanity has developed which differentiate men from beasts.

Love is not only the bone and sinew, but the brain and spinal marrow of fiction; it sustains, animates, and motivates fiction's life and interest. Few books are written which do not present love in one or in several of its displays, which are as varied as nature. Love has been more or less "standardized" by convention, and the pattern differs or changes from time to time like fashions in dress. Charlotte Lovell, Mrs. Wharton's "Old Maid" of the Fifties, "whose hair was too bright red and her eyes too pale brown but who had a slim waist, a light foot and a gay laughter", would find it difficult to put over today the things she so easily accomplished three generations ago. She had experienced love and she had intuitive knowledge of what love does to her sex: "A woman never stops thinking of the man she loves. She thinks of him years afterward, in all sorts of unconscious ways, in thinking of all sorts of things — books, pictures, sunsets, a flower or a ribbon — or a clock on the mantelpiece." But unlike Hartley Coleridge's "Solitary Hearted", Charlotte had an understanding friend. Thus she accomplished her end, mothered and oriented her child.

Love does not have to be constantly mentioned in literature, nor the throes of it described. Indeed it need not be mentioned at all, as in the little masterpiece of Gogol called "An Oldtime Household", which tells of the lives of two old people, husband and wife, who believe the whole world is happy because they are. What we all ask is to feel it. A story without love is more insipid than an egg without salt, and one which has not the spiritual breath of love instilled into



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it, subtly or otherwise, has small charm and is generally short lived.

Tastes differ widely as to the best or most convincing form of its display. Some like to read of the cave man variety; others are fascinated by the way the Complete Man of "Antic Hay" won the physiologist's wife, a combination of genuineness and artifice that Rosie Shearwater could not resist. A few like to have it pathetically ignored or rebuked; but the majority want it to be satisfied and returned by its object — very few are content to see it follow its course without disharmony, break, or shock. Though no one believes that love is constantly in flood tide, that it glows continuously, or that it is subservient to the will or the desire, yet the novelist who so depicts it is likely to parent a best seller. Laura Jean Libbey profited materially by this weakness of ours.

Novels have been written about every kind of love that the human mind can encompass: moral and immoral, spiritual and criminal, carnal and sublime, passing and enduring, selfish and heroic. Writers have recorded all its variations, and while some look at them askance, others enjoy them. Some call them bad form, others call them immoral; but the minority are indifferent to them.

Love in fiction follows a fashion which is determined largely by public taste; there have been generations which have thrilled at the manner in which it took possession of Dante and Petrarch. "Don Quixote" appeals more now than when first published three centuries ago, and the chivalric love it displays will probably appeal more and more as the love Cervantes described becomes less plausible and possible. Marcella, daughter of William the Rich, who did more harm in the country than the plague would do, because her courteousness and fair looks drew everyone to her while her reserve and disdain broke their hearts; and Lucinda the faultless Andalusian, who inspired the Knight of the mountain to superhuman renunciation, have given way to the flapper and the feminist to whom romantic love is idiotic and pathetic.

The greatest love story the world has ever known is entombed in the Middle Ages. Heloise was more typically mediæval than Abelard. He was merely the inspirer of the great passion, the record of which has been transmitted to us. At first, it was no more for him than an experience, then it became an element in his life; but for Heloise it was the breath of life, her *raison d'être*. When punishment came to them, Abelard suffered for his lost reputation, but Heloise suffered her lover's pain. She grieved because she had been the source of it. Throughout their love she had been the sacrificed one, and the great scholar accepted her sacrifice as men of today accept it — without realization of its value.

It is astonishing, reading as we do so much of love and experiencing so widely its potencies, that we remain so ignorant of love. Every now and then someone writes a book about it, but rarely is our knowledge of it thereby increased. "The Anatomy of Melancholy" is still the standard treatise in English, though Richard Burton did not possess qualifications to discourse on love matters since he had not made trial of it personally, or been mad or lovesick himself. On the other hand, I surmise from something M. Emmanuel Berl says in the preface to his recent book on "The Nature of Love", that *he* has.

M. Berl is a simple, credulous, inquisitive mystic living in the enchant-

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ing hills of the High Savoie, who looks upon love as a momentary participation in a vaster reality than itself. He discusses with great earnestness and display of learning the various explanations that have been given of the origin of love and its object, and of the nature of love. Love, for him, includes all those feelings presented to consciousness which are connected with external and personal objects. It therefore includes religious feelings, friendship, and patriotism, as well as the relation between a man and a woman.

He holds with Plato that a thing whose origin is known needs no explaining. He therefore seeks to discover the origin of love, to see if it cannot be reduced to a single cause, and to determine whether this cause is a reality or whether it expresses a reality other than itself. It seems to him impossible to regard either self or things as the sole origin of love. Love must have several causes, or it must have one cause which is neither its object nor its subject.

When M. Berl turns to physiology and biology in his search for the origin of love, he finds that they merely trace out frames into which love can fit itself. He is compelled to admit that love cannot be caused solely by the "influence" of the object on the subject. Neither can it be explained by the nature of the object experiencing it. And since there is no conclusive proof that love has its origin in a biological tendency, M. Berl asks himself if love, after all, does not happen to be something sociological. Is sociology not able to solve the problem of love? After much show of learned inquiry, he has to admit he cannot guess the riddle. Though he seems to fail in all his attempts to find a cause for love, he refuses to raise the white flag. He plumps it out heroically and confidently: love comes from God. We should content ourselves with knowing what it is: whether it is simple or compound and what are its elements. It all depends from what angle you view it. When you get it yourself it is very compound; when others have it, it is very simple; and the novelists know its elements better than any of us. At least, they tell us a lot about it, and it is to be hoped they will continue to do so; but I call their attention to M. Berl's most important conclusion: "Love aims after an impossible synthesis of irreducible elements, and endeavors to give effect to potencies that are irreconcilable. Each one of its states tires it; changes its law."

I am by no means certain that Ethel M. Kelley, whose latest book "Wings" testifies her comprehensive knowledge of love, will agree with the learned Savoyard, but the conclusion will be satisfactory to Paul Jasper Hutchinson and to his brothers under the skin. Paul need feel no remorse for the caddish way he treated Eleanor Gaylord, and when the day comes — and it is likely to come very soon — on which Priscilla will say to him, "Jazz, you are a stuffed shirt, not a genius", he may find some solace in reading "The Nature of Love". If he has not succumbed to Narcissus's fate by the time "The Little French Girl" is either mentioned or discussed by his set, he may deign to glance through its pages. Alix's fidelity and priggishness will annoy him; Giles's parochialism will offend him. And he will wish that Toppie had crossed his path, that she might know it depends more upon the path than upon the feet whether one may walk erect and securely. But he will like Madame Vervier: she understood love and practised it as a fine art. And he

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will subscribe to Monsieur de Maubert's sentiments: "Cannot a fountain throw itself into the air repeatedly and remain itself? Does not Spring return to us again and again? It is with our hearts as with nature: a renewal; a discovery of fresh beauty. And since we are all different, with each new love there is the discovery of new beauty."

It is not because of M. de Maubert's theory or Madame Vervier's practice that Miss Sedgwick's novel is having an undeserved popularity. It is because Alix is romantic and Toppie mediæval and Giles chivalric, and we are none of these things; because they are not real flesh and blood, and we are, that we read the book or tell others they should. There is more real psychology of love in one chapter of "Le Rouge et le Noir" than there is between the covers of "The Little French Girl". Love means one thing to the Anglo-Saxon, another to the French. That is the reason such a book as "De l'Amour" of Stendhal, or "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" of de Laclos, seems so stupid to the former and so illuminating to the latter.

Love has taken up with a new sort of life in modern novels. It has shed its more poetical and unreal aspect and has bravely adopted short dresses and silk stockings, as it were. It has followed the general trend of things, it has lived in the open and told the world its most preciously guarded secrets and carefully hidden weaknesses.

There is little doubt that the love which has been more particularly studied by Charles Baudelaire, Marcel Proust, Oscar Wilde, D. H. Lawrence, has always existed; but it was not vulgarized until "Les Fleurs du Mal", "A l'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs", and "The Rainbow" appeared. They were a revelation to many, and a cry of revolt, quickly subdued, was uttered by the reading public. But gradually the love they depict has been accepted as an integral part of modern life. Such writers' efforts appeal to three classes: those who possess this strange genesic anomaly, those who are curious to know of it, and those who are emotioned and spurred by the display of artistry. Such books say nothing to the person no one knows but everyone thinks exists: the average man — or if they do, their message spells *ennui*.

Is the love that is described in the novels of today the real thing, or is it figment of the author's imagination? If it is the former, then the love described by Cervantes, Boccaccio, Shakespeare, the Brontës, Mérimée, Meredith, et al. must have been real too, and this is incredible.

The man who first ejaculated, "Other times, other customs", probably had been reading love stories of olden days and recalling his own. What could be more unlike than the amatory reflex of Iris Storm, whose most conspicuous outward adornments were a green hat and a Hispano-Suiza car, and that of Jane Eyre? A cross section of one day of Iris's life would have scandalized Jane, and one can imagine the comment Iris would make on Jane's conduct which led to her being received and succored by the kindly St. John sisters.

It is a long step too from the love Mrs. Wharton describes in her "Age of Innocence" or "Ethan Frome" to that Mr. Bromfield depicts in "The Green Bay Tree". In the first two, we see love's victims renounce their passion in order to save a name, a family, a reputation, a happiness. In the recent novel Lily Shane, who did not love, stained her name, ignored her family, destroyed her reputation,

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and failed to obtain happiness when the Governor had his way with her so easily because of her determination to "know what it was". Shameless conduct, some would call it; but those who believe that Beyle was a wise and discerning prophet when he wrote a hundred years ago, "The admission of women to perfect equality would be the surest sign of civilization", will fail to see why woman is not as much entitled to experience as man. The truth is that under present social and ethical conditions neither is entitled to it. But, as things work out in Mr. Bromfield's novel, the Governor profits and Lily loses. Doubtless such a course of events is true to life, for like all first novels "The Green Bay Tree" is largely record of fact, transcript of occurrences pasted on photographs of places where the writer's plastic, sensitive soul was first exposed. Moreover, Lily's conduct had the effect of disheartening her younger sister Irene. After Lily, not satisfied with her already vast experience, had set lustful eyes upon Krylenko, Irene sublimated her love for the young Russian, became a nun, and died an obscure death with ecstasy and bitterness in her heart. To be sure, Lily was made beautiful by carnal love and Irene withered under her efforts to overcome her flesh, but moralists will refuse to consider this justification.

If Irene had been more gifted by nature, endowed with a more ardent soul, and if her education had been received tramping the wild regions of Central Europe in the wake of a gipsy mother and a Magyar fiddler instead of in a Parisian convent, she might have displayed the ecstatic, carnal, impassionate and irresistible love Blanche Walska ("The Book of Blanche" by Dorothy Richardson) experienced for Dr. Eugene Sevier. Blanche's love had an outlet through her musical talent which, when she expressed it on her violin, would have made any display of human affection repulsive to her. She needed to be in love in order to give the best there was in her, but she demanded no return; she would bestow adoration, and expect nothing.

In its unselfishness and in its need of sacrifice, Blanche's love had some resemblance to the emotions that were part of the makeup of Joanna Godden, "who had a firm, white neck, broad shoulders, deep bosom and strong waist; who was tall, too, with large useful hands and feet". Strangers who were first impressed by her heaviness soon dismissed this impression, so eager and living were her blue eyes. If they could have known of the emotions which welled up in her, and which she inhibited for so long, they would have marveled at the finer qualities she did not display outwardly. Joanna Godden, like Lennie Colman who sensed the iniquity of the Tattooed Countess from afar, was cut out somatically and spiritually for love and never got it; she was not made so much to be loved as to love and to protect, to have a large family and to look after husband and children with the same motherly look. Her experiences with love were of the most pathetic in modern fiction, but she was able to cope with all the disappointments, deceits, and tortures she endured.

There are few more prevalent delusions than that the amatory capacity and gonadial sweep of the fair sex are greatest in those who have beauty of face or figure. Pulchritude and passion are antithetic. Ninon de Lenclos may have been an exception to the rule.

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Where one Joanna Godden will repress her love instincts until she can do it no longer, and then become the prey of the first masculine voice who whispers love to her, nine Gwennies will throw down all barriers to achieve their destiny; Miss Kelley told how it could be done in "Heart's Blood".

Conventions are the obstacles civilization has set in the way of love; there is an accepted routine through which prospective lovers are expected to go. But this routine in both real life and fiction is being more and more disregarded. It may be followed the first time — for it is after all the only way to win a woman of a certain degree of refinement and persuade her into marriage — but the accepted period of courtship loses much of its romantic quality when one has been through it once, and one is more anxious to taste the ripe fruit than to admire the tree in blossom. When love is represented in such manner as to defy conventions; when it wanders from the ordinary path and becomes so compelling that it knows no master, so ardent it knows no bound, so irrepressible it knows no shame, and so blind it knows no conscience, "when reason pulls one way, burning lust another", the world is ready to throw the first stone at its victims.

The great art of the novelist and of the story teller is to feature love of that kind and to give it such quality and such artistry that the heart of the reader will fill with admiration instead of contempt. This has been done often by the great masters — as Flaubert in "Madame Bovary" — and it has been done recently by a young Armenian, Michael Arlen, in "The Green Hat". Iris Storm is a well known type which is generally despised by public opinion, hated by women, and admired if not respected by men. She committed many of the sins against which we are warned in the Decalogue, yet we cannot help liking her. She ran true to form to her end, and she made an artistic job of that, too. Like Gwennie, she had no fear, no timidity, and if she devoted her life to loving and to being loved, she may be forgiven because she had the courage of her convictions and practised what she believed.

Few experiences are more distasteful to the average reader than caricatures of love in fiction. The majority of us regard love as a sacred institution, happy or morbid, tragic or fulfilling in its display, but sacred just the same; we hold it as a haven of grace, as a happy promise or as a sweet memory. When novelists ridicule it, we are embittered. We despise Minnie, the Invincible, when we see her calculate how far her pretended love can carry her toward material prosperity. She wrecks her sister's happiness without a pang of conscience, ruins the life of the man she thought she loved and of the man who loved her, and goes through life disseminating misery and corruption. Throughout the novel, however, we can see what beautiful achievements love might work if left to itself; but few loves can overcome the evil of the world and the wickedness of an ambitious, unscrupulous woman. Minnie was both wicked and ambitious and life for her was a bed of roses, whereas it was a torture to her sister, whose only weapons were constancy and honesty in love.

Tess D'Urberville had no other weapon in her struggle against life than faithfulness in love. Her devotion to Angel Clare, the proofs she gave him of her affection, the confidence she had in his sentiment for her, and the sufferings she endured for his

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sake, make her an outstanding figure among lovers of modern times. Tess had the instincts of a lady, a sense of justice, and an undue amount of sensitiveness; even when she becomes a murderer, she does not forfeit our sympathy. But fate was against her and so was the judgment of the world.

In "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" we see love in its most pathetic and most inspiring display, unrewarded and unfulfilled but true to its dying breath. If we agree with Walter Scott that "Love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears", the picture of Tess is one of the best of modern fiction. Mr. Moore might not admit it, for "its author has listened long to the quackers that beset the shallows of mortality".

One of the most promising young novelists of France, François Mauriac, whose mind has been cast in Catholicism and whose tendencies are extreme religiousness struggling against worldly passions, has described three sorts of love in his recent novels, all of which I think have appeared in English translation. In "Le Fleuve de Feu" passion without real love took possession of Gisele early in her life and wrecked it; she forgot honor and convention. She had had one stern lesson, but could not be taught by experience. Eventually, however, environment and heredity saved her and religion overcame her flesh. In "Le Baiser au Lépreux" we see love making the great sacrifice: Jean dies for his wife, to allow her freedom and the happiness which his frail constitution and repulsive ugliness prevented. Noemi, who has despised her husband and at times hated him, will find fulfilment by remaining true to his memory; she will repay him in ample measure by keeping fresh and intact the memory of the only man who loved her, and by allowing love for him to fill her empty life.

"Genitrix", which develops the theory of the mother love conflicting with the wife love, completes the triology of Mauriac's great problems. Fernand despised his wife because his mother did. When his wife died, he turned against his mother and fell in love with his wife. But when she in turn died and left him a solitary man with no love and no affection, he again put his mother on the high pedestal and to her devoted his last thoughts, his last wishes and his dying breath.

Every now and again a novelist feels impelled to tell us that winter can nestle his hoary head in the lap of spring comfortably and beneficially; we are told of the love of a mature or old man for a young girl. Unless the disparity of ages is tremendous, the alleged occurrence seems acceptable as it is in real life. But when an old woman vamps a boy, as Mrs. Blifil vamped Tom Jones, or as Ella Poore vamped Gareth Johns when the latter answered to the name of Carl Van Vechten a quarter of a century ago back in Maple Valley, Iowa, we experience a disagreeable sensation in the domain of the solar plexus and readily convince ourselves that it is not only *inconvenant*, but disgusting. The only example that I recall in recent fiction that was not attended by any but agreeable sensations and associations was that of Mrs. Forrester in "A Lost Lady".

Love will continue to be the theme of the novelist, even though the biologist and the sociologist, the idealist and the realist, fail to explain it. For as Ruskin truthfully wrote: "When sun and breath fail it shall endure, and we shall go on laying our soul full in her hands, low at her feet."

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# STEVENSON EMERGES

## By George S. Hellman

THE Stevenson myth is one of the most astounding episodes in the history of modern literature. It began toward the end of Stevenson's life when, in far away Samoa, he developed into, so to speak, an island chieftain, with various native retainers, and with Samoan children reciting the prayers that he himself had written. Mr. Balfour's biography, the Life authorized and supervised by Mrs. Stevenson, did much to confirm this myth of Stevenson as the type of man who should be held up for the emulation of youth. Of course the close students of Stevenson's letters, as well as many silent, very silent, friends and acquaintances in Edinburgh and London, have known better — have known that Stevenson was a sensuous, often weak, often wonderfully brave, generous fellow. Somewhat of a poseur, yes; reckless in youth, but honorable and hardworking in meeting the obligations of manhood; full of foibles, yet much of the hero. In a word, a very human being who, however he may have stumbled, rose to his feet again and, often with gayness that was a philosophical even more than a temperamental attribute, pressed forward on the ways of life.

It is this picture that Mr. Steuart presents with a candor that does him credit. Instead of dismissing Stevenson's early years of profligacy, of bitter rebellion against dogmatic religion, of almost an actor's posing in contravention to the customs of society, with that brevity of comment which makes preceding biographies so partial and misleading, he goes with the scholar's courage into the youthful period of fermentation and revolt. He considers the mass of those poems belonging to the early Seventies which Mrs. Stevenson suppressed, and which but for what has been called a happy accident might have been lost forever to the world of letters. He is eminently interested in showing that Henley, whose lone voice was raised in protest — and who was so attacked for this protest — when the first Stevenson biography appeared, was essentially right. The "seraph in chocolate" figure has been definitely broken up and the man himself is, I shall not say wholly revealed, but clearer than ever before. Stevenson remains, for all of his faults, a fine man, an inspiring combatant in life's struggle. That he is no longer the kind of human being most logically the subject for Sunday morning sermons, or for boys' schools to be named after, is of little consequence. Far more important is it that Robert Louis Stevenson who hated hypocrisy, who wished to be depicted as he was, is now having real justice done to him, and that the curtain woven of suppressions, discolorations, unwarranted adulation, false lessons, is now more and more drawn aside.

In taking up the subject of the remarkable woman with whom Stevenson, eleven years her junior, became enamored at Grez, and whom he later



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married, Mr. Steuart mingles frankness with discretion. How the latter quality comes to the fore is indicated by the omission of all reference, in the body of Mr. Steuart's work, to Clayton Hamilton's interesting and significant volume on Stevenson, although on the first page of the circular issued by Mr. Steuart's American publishers the deleted passages of Mr. Hamilton's book come in for the mention they well merit. On the other hand, Mr. Steuart is engagingly courageous in giving a fresh outline of the character of Stevenson's life, in many ways so different from that shown in the Life of Mrs. Stevenson written by her sister. The strength of her character remains apparent; her value to Stevenson as wife, companion, nurse, literary adviser, are excellently illustrated; but the biographer does not hesitate to touch upon some of her less attractive qualities that were a source of harassment to Stevenson, that alienated various of his friends, and that, particularly in the case of Henley, wrought such unhappiness in Stevenson's life. For almost half a century mystery, as far as the public is concerned, has surrounded the break in the friendship between Henley and Stevenson, and only now has the adequate story been told of the cause of this rift and of what may be regarded as its spiritual consequence to Stevenson. Henley had expressed to Stevenson, in a letter which was meant only for the eyes of its recipient, his decided amazement at what seemed to him an act of plagiarism on Mrs. Stevenson's part in using a story written by Stevenson's cousin and Henley's friend, Katherine de Mattos, and at having Mrs. Stevenson's story appear without any acknowledgment to Mrs. de Mattos. Stevenson was caught on the horns of a difficult dilemma. His first violent reaction was in the direction of loyalty to his wife, but later he was in black despair at having lost his friend. Extenuating circumstances brought forward by Miss Masson in her volume on Stevenson, as well as by Mr. Steuart, lessen the gravity of the act that so disturbed Henley. Yet if it was warranted, why these many decades of silence concerning the circumstances? Stevenson, involved in this lamentable rupture of friendship, maintained the chivalrous attitude toward his wife which had led him to break with his parents and, bankrupt in money, almost bankrupt in health, to follow Mrs. Osbourne to California. His was the point of view of noblesse oblige, although such lifetime attitude of a man toward his wife does not imply the desire of centuried silence on the part of others if such a silence involves injustice to friends and kinsmen, and leads to a misunderstanding of a man's own character and philosophy. We may here dismiss the subject with the expression of the opinion that it was in some ways unfortunate, in other ways very fortunate indeed, that Robert Louis Stevenson met and wedded Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne.

Stevenson was first of all a man of courage. He considered courage the chief virtue, with a conscious cheerfulness as perhaps the second of the virtues. Although by reason of inherited traits he liked, at times, to play the preacher, the Ten Commandments really didn't much interest him. Courage and kindness, cheerfulness — in a dark and difficult world where the best man is still a sinner and where an ineluctable fate awaits even the strongest will — these were, thought Stevenson, the qualities that a man must fight for and fight with. It is his philosophy in a nutshell. Add to

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this philosophy the charm of a delightful personality, the facility of a stylist to express the intimate and the general human message in winning phrases; add also the pleasure-giving quality of Stevenson's imaginative writings, and we arrive at the explanation of his large appeal to youth and to age, the world over.

All this Mr. Steuart's biography well brings out. His criticism of Stevenson as a man of letters does not, like Mr. Swinnerton's more serious study, relegate the popular author to a very secondary position in Victorian literature, nor does it echo the over-adulation of so many preceding writers. Of course Stevenson did not have the great creative imagination, and even his style must be looked upon as in part imitative. He remains, however, by virtue of magic of the personal touch, and the injection of himself into his writings, an often delightful writer; and with the influx of new light that in the last few years — with Lady Colvin's letters, with Mr. Osbourne's belated but charming little book, with Miss Masson's and Mr. Steuart's biographies — is more truly showing the man himself, we may feel assured that ultimately the real Stevenson, with all his weaknesses and all his virtues, will, an unnecessary myth dispelled, permanently hold a place in the affection of mankind. And Mr. Steuart's volume, despite some lacunæ which must yet be supplied, is unquestionably the most significant piece of biography that has appeared in the Stevenson field.

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Robert Louis Stevenson. By John A. Steuart. Two volumes. Little, Brown and Co.

## EGO

By Charles Norman

IT is not good to die
While the earth is glowing,
And the tree-girt hills and the sky
Laugh at your going.

Lord, when my time has come
To cease all grieving,
Grant that the earth be dumb
Upon my leaving.

Let all the earth be dull,
And a lone gull crying:
*Death* should loom beautiful
To one who's dying.

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# ENGLAND AND AMERICA: CONTRASTS

*A Conversation between*

## Bernard Shaw and Archibald Henderson

*THE time: spring of 1924; the place: 10 Adelphi Terrace, W. C. 2; the girl—oh well, she was missing! But there were present George Bernard Shaw, the most interesting man in the world, and Archibald Henderson, his biographer. From the wall looks down Augustus John's heroic portrait of Shaw, fleering and audacious—to which Shaw points in mock admiration with the remark: "That is the* GREAT *Shaw." Both laugh heartily.*

HENDERSON. I don't know John—but Cockrell showed me his remarkable portrait of Thomas Hardy when I was at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge the other day. And there I saw the replica—almost!—of this one of you—but not so defiant, much more human. Hardy and Shaw—"I'll say he's some picker", as Ring Lardner might say. Which somehow or other reminds me of the Nobel Prize. Last year the prize for literature went to your native land—W. B. Yeats; for physics to mine—R. A. Millikan. May I ask if you think British and American genius, in science and the arts, has been adequately recognized by the committee of award of the Nobel Prize?

SHAW. I have never studied the list. The committee cannot recognize genius: it can only accept an established reputation and a very safe one: that is to say, an uncontroversial one. As the reputations of the greatest geniuses in literature are always matters of fierce controversy until they are dead, or at least very old and harmless, the greatest geniuses in literature are out of the running. The prize winners are like the modest hotels in Baedeker: "well spoken of". Occasionally a man whose art is of international interest, whilst the controversies in which he has compromised himself are local and transitory, bags the coveted forty thousand dollars and does credit to it. William Butler Yeats, for example! But in most cases, as in Rudyard Kipling's, the committee must accept a reasonably dignified popularity as the safest qualification. But of course the whole conception of prize giving as applied to the fine arts is absurd. The Nobel business is a lottery open to all who have achieved a minimum of celebrity. As such it is useful as bringing an occasional windfall to an unpaid worker; but that is all that can be said for it!

HENDERSON. It comes to America for science and statesmanship, chiefly; but literature doesn't have a look in. Had Mark Twain lived, I think the Nobel Prize would have gone to him—for as I pointed out in a biography of him at the time of his death, Mark Twain was not simply a humorist: he was a sociologist in fiction, whose works are priceless documents for the historian of the future; and above all, a moralist who fought for virtue, integ-



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rity, and truth with valiant courage.

SHAW. Yes, Clemens was in very much the same position as myself. He had to put matters in such a way as to make people, who would otherwise hang him, believe he was joking!

HENDERSON. What a splendid subject Mark Twain would have made for Augustus John. But after all, I believe you consider that Rodin, in the bronze bust of you in the other room, has discovered the "real" Shaw. That must be why you pointed it out, with the words: "Just as I am without one plea." Rodin was a towering genius—and a splendid, lovable old fellow to boot. I recall that you presented him with a copy of the Kelmscott Chaucer the day we were here together. Is it true you base your hope for fame on the fact that your bust was made by Rodin?

SHAW (*grinning*). Without a doubt. In that very copy of the Kelmscott Chaucer I wrote these lines:

I have seen two masters at work, Morris who made this book,
The other Rodin the Great, who fashioned my head in clay:
I give the book to Rodin, scrawling my name in a nook
Of the shrine their works shall hallow when mine are dust by the way.

I once wrote that at least I was sure of a place in the biographical dictionaries a thousand years hence as: "Shaw, Bernard: subject of a bust by Rodin: otherwise unknown."

HENDERSON (*laughing*). Posterity will not forget you and Wells: they will be too tickled by your gaudy Utopias—your "Back to Methuselahs" and "Men like Gods" and "Dreams". What a remarkable fellow—Wells!—educator, scientist, man of letters—perhaps that is the bond of sympathy I feel with him: similarity of tastes and pursuits. He gives you the impression of a strong swimmer in the turbulent current of contemporary life—a vital, thrilling part of the element in which he moves. His "Outline of History" made all the professional historians envious because he succeeded in making history at once popular and readable—as readable as fiction, as popular as a best seller. But what a howler he perpetrated about George Washington: that he was a notoriously indolent man!!!

SHAW (*smilingly reminiscent*). You and he had it out hammer and tongs—I am not likely to forget it!—in this very room. Washington, I believe, is one of your American divinities—along with Lincoln, Lee, and now Wilson.

HENDERSON. At the time, as it happened, I had just completed a work on Washington, a labor of love and years. I pointed out to Wells that as a matter of perfectly established fact, Washington was a man of extraordinary versatility, determination, and energy—scout, ambassador, traveler, soldier, military commander, ruler, farmer, letter writer, financier, promoter, etc., etc. Wells obstinately stood to his guns, declaring he meant that, politically, Washington was entirely static; and that even if he was physically energetic, it was waste motion—for he quite unnecessarily rose at four o'clock in the morning and rode over his estate, whereas he would have been far more efficient if he had remained in bed until eight o'clock and let his overseer get up early and ride around the farm! At this delightful *non sequitur*, we all burst into a roar of laughter. And finally Wells confessed that the howler would be omitted in the next edition of the "Outline of History".

Nothing amuses Americans more, for example, than for Arnold Bennett to say that New York's "electric"

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energy is an illusion, or for Wells to call our eighteenth century Roosevelt notoriously indolent. Have you found Americans notoriously indolent?

SHAW (*smiling skeptically*). The human race is notoriously indolent. It is also notoriously industrious. If Wells says that Washington was lazy he is probably right, as he does not invent his facts. But perhaps all he means is that George did not run around like a mouse in oxygen as the modern American does.

HENDERSON. But, my dear Shaw, compare, for a single example, the hours of labor of the business man in New York and London. The American is at his office at eight thirty or nine o'clock and remains until five or six; and works straight up till twelve or one o'clock on Saturday. The Briton knocks off work Friday at noon, goes to the country for the weekend, and does not return to his office until say eleven o'clock on the following Tuesday. In matters of business, large or small, the American prides himself on quick decisions and speedy results. In England it takes a man at least a week to come to a decision on any subject. Which method, in your opinion, is calculated to produce the best results: the slow, deliberate procedure of the British, or the speed and hustle of the American?

SHAW (*quizzically disdainful*). The slow, deliberate Britisher is as imaginary as the hustling American. In my youth it was the Yankee who was slow and deliberate and dry and always successful. Mark Twain, you may remember, kept up something of that tradition in his manner. Now the stage American hustles; and the stage Englishman is above business, though his solicitor is occasionally tolerated as a mild humorist. The real Englishman in business comes to grief—when he does come to grief—by taking Friday to Tuesday off, and being more interested in golf than in his business. The real American comes to grief because he thinks he is hustling along fine when he is only sending unnecessary telegrams and taking unnecessary journeys all day long. Americans have the most elaborate filing systems in the world; but no American can ever find a letter. And every American believes that the postage to every spot on the globe is two cents, thereby levying an enormous tax on the rest of the world in double charges for deficient stamps.

HENDERSON. We must broadcast this conversation in the United States by radio, in order to give my fellow countrymen a "new angle" (as we unscientifically say) on the much vaunted "American hustle". If we accept your unspoken definition of "hustle" as superfluous and fruitless expenditure of energy (a definition I do not for a moment accept), may I ask this further question: Does hustling "get you anywhere"?

SHAW (*grimly*). In half developed countries it may. In England it is useless: the plots are all preempted and the berths all occupied. You have to wait until someone dies. It is pathetic to see the newly arrived young American looking with contemptuous amazement at the hopeless Englishmen who will not hustle, quite sure that he will bawl them all out in a week. He soon finds his mistake, poor lad! The German used to beat him hollow at that game in London, because the German was much better taught and disciplined, and was out, not to make money, but to learn how to make money, no matter how hard the work and how small the pay.

HENDERSON. I daresay there is much truth in what you say. In a

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wonderfully rich and prosperous country like the United States, teeming with natural resources and business opportunities, of all sorts, hustling still brings rich rewards. All Europeans tell me that Americans are spoiled by having too much money to spend — and spending it! Americans are constantly establishing in European markets fictitious standards of value — especially in books, pictures, manuscripts, art objects, and the like — through a surplus of spending capital. The bus drivers of London are now on strike for a weekly wage which is the daily wage of a house painter or bricklayer in the United States! It still pays to hustle in a country like the United States, which has not yet been fully exploited. I suppose you would admit that Americans *are* hustlers?

SHAW (*surrendering — but at discretion*). Yes; that is why they never find time to do anything.

HENDERSON. It is a perennial source of amusement to an American to observe the conservatism of Great Britain, fighting sternly the losing battle against the modern improvements, inventions, and innovations of American genius. Central heating systems, adequate bathing facilities, modern lighting, etc. — what a mighty struggle for victory these inevitable reforms still have to wage against British dread of innovation. At the Whitefriars Club not long ago, when Sir Reginald Blomfield spoke on "The Future of London" and wholeheartedly condemned the American skyscraper, I was the one person present to speak a word in æsthetic defense of the majestic skyline of New York harbor and the grand canyon (not of the Yellowstone, but —) of Wall Street. By the way, what do you think of skyscrapers — which the French attractively call *frotteurs du ciel?*

SHAW (*laughing heartily*). A Moorish Marabout once turned me down as an outrageous liar because I tried to describe one to him when he questioned the possibility of such aggregations of population as produce them. The obvious objections to them are that the space occupied by the lifts, which are virtually up-ended streets, must involve enormous rents to make them pay, and that a threat of earthquake or anything else that would cause all their occupants to rush into the street simultaneously, might pile an ordinary roadway with dead bodies six deep. And what about the sunless canyons they produce? Evidently they should not be arranged in horizontal streets. They should be isolated.

HENDERSON. The question of foundation is of course a very important consideration. It is safe to build skyscrapers in New York City on a rock foundation with little or no danger of subsidence; but it is a serious question to build skyscrapers on the marshy foundations of London. Aside from this, do you think skyscrapers would suit London?

SHAW. Just as well or ill as they would suit any other city equally free from earthquakes. But we set a limit to the height of buildings relatively to the width of the street, and this operates as an isolation law that the builders could not afford to comply with.

HENDERSON. I wonder sometimes that you do not visit the United States. Sooner or later all distinguished foreigners visit our country — and either lecture us on our shortcomings, give out silly interviews before they have landed, or write even sillier books after they go back home. You ought not to miss what Mencken calls "the greatest show on earth". Of course you've often been invited?

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SHAW. About twice a week for the last twenty years. The invitation is always accompanied by an announcement in the American press that I am coming; and the next mail brings me a few million requests for lectures and offers of hospitality.

HENDERSON. Yes — I have conveyed to you myself from lecture bureaus pressing invitations to lecture for positively colossal compensation. Once you said you were afraid to land in New York, dreading arrest and incarceration for doubting the Biblical story of Elisha and the bears. Another time you said you couldn't bear to see the Statue of Liberty: your sense of irony not being able to bear the strain. Still another time — since the world war — you told me that, having delivered over a period of upwards of forty years something like two thousand public speeches, for which you had never accepted a single penny of compensation, you would not at sixty five care to break the habit of a lifetime — unless the British government literally taxed you out of existence. By the way, why *don't* you visit the United States?

SHAW (*in comic despair*). Is not Europe enough for one man?

HENDERSON. Now that the Theatre Guild is producing your latest plays with so much success, perhaps they want you to come over and produce your plays?

SHAW (*giving America up*). No. Americans believe that nobody can produce plays but themselves.

HENDERSON. It might be worth your while to visit New York, not merely the financial, but today the theatrical and musical centre of the world.

SHAW. As "Heartbreak House", "Back to Methuselah", and "Saint Joan" were first performed in New York, the supremacy of the New York theatre can hardly be challenged.

HENDERSON. The United States enjoys another theatrical eminence at the present time. While the American stage has as many and as able actors as the British stage, it completely overtops the British stage in the number of its able actresses. I wonder if this is accidental!

SHAW (*questioningly*). Is it a fact? I have no first hand knowledge of it. It has been the rule everywhere that actresses are better than actors, because the careers which offer the greatest opportunities to histrionic talent, such as the church, the bar, the political platform, and to a certain extent the army and diplomacy, have been closed to women. The women who, if they had been men, would have been cardinals, king's counselors, demagogues, ambassadors, or condottieres, go on the stage, where they are more highly paid than men and enjoy an undisputed equality of opportunity and esteem with them. Except in cases of the Garrick type, where the natural specialization of the actor is overwhelming, the male actor is the refuse of the professions, whereas the leading lady is the pick of them. I should therefore infer from your statement that the professions are more overcrowded in England than in America, and less accessible or agreeable to women in America than in England.

HENDERSON. I note with interest that in recent years Englishmen — I think of Henderson, Lord Charnwood, and Drinkwater — have been writing biographies and plays dealing with conspicuous American figures: Lee, "Stonewall" Jackson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. How do you account for this?

SHAW. I suppose we are running short of heroes on this side.

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HENDERSON. What were your chief impressions of Drinkwater's play on Lee? I missed the production, but read the printed play. Drinkwater's Lee was a onesided and limited character, very unlike the lofty figure enshrined in the hearts of all true Americans, irrespective of section.

SHAW. The performance held me from beginning to end, as Drinkwater's plays always do. I could not ask for a better play: if the facts of history are to be accepted in it. But plays about fairly beaten generals are never completely satisfactory. They can only emphasize the weakness that produced the defeat. Even Masefield could not make Pompey exhilarating.

HENDERSON. Drinkwater makes Lee merely a Virginian, who casts in his lot with the south out of blind loyalty to his native state. A foreigner seeing the play might well imagine that the war between the states was a conflict between Virginia and the north. Lee didn't believe in slavery and didn't wish the Southern States to secede from the Union, but he firmly believed in the constitutional right of secession, which he had been taught at West Point in "Rawle on the Constitution". He was not a tragic hero in the Drinkwater sense, foreseeing from the beginning the south's failure; he was a great soldier who fought to win. His victories — and against heavy odds — were spectacular; and he was fairly beaten in the end, only by overwhelming numbers. I should like very much to know if to you, an unprejudiced foreign observer, Drinkwater's Lee was the Lee of history?

SHAW. I have not made a study of Lee; and Drinkwater has. I have an impression of Lee; but I don't know where I got it; probably from some portrait. My notion is that Lee was a soldier, with a soldier's limitations, and a soldier's contempt for democratic fancies about individual freedom. Soldiering is the completest slavery possible in civilized society; and as Lee knew this professionally, he could hardly have felt very strongly about the slavery of Sambo. If Lee had been a political genius, he would have hoofed Jefferson Davis out and made himself Military Dictator of the Confederacy. Drinkwater's play was broken by the historical impossibility of making this the climax of it: the collapse of Lee in the scene with Davis was dramatically unforgivable.

## CONSOLATION

By Hudson Strode

OH well, after all, man's lot is somewhat better than the sea gull's —
For in *his* idiotic wheeling urged by sex and belly hunger,
There come to him occasional flashes of a mystery called Beauty,
Glimpsed in some unconscious thing, like a grey gull's grace of wing.

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# THE SKETCH BOOK

*E. S. Roscoe — Nellie Doty Butts — Malcolm Cowley*
*Charles Hanson Towne*

## HENRY JAMES AT THE REFORM CLUB

By E. S. Roscoe

HENRY JAMES, as a man and as a letter writer, has lately interested many who, from various causes, have been unable to follow him through his later novels. Of his life at Rye something has been told, though rather from the point of view of the weekend visitor to Lamb House than from that of the observer of James's daily round in the ancient Sussex seaport. Some slight notes of his later life at the Reform Club, London, may add to the knowledge of his attractive personality and be a slight supplement to his own "Middle Years". James was elected on the twenty third of May, 1878. He was proposed by C. H. Robarts, a well known member of the Bar, and seconded by Frank H. Hill, editor of the "Daily News". Both were strong Liberals, for at that time the Reform Club was a fairly active political centre in a quiet way. It was not, however, until November, 1900, that Henry James became tenant of one of the bedrooms which are let permanently to members. This was No. 6 Chamber, a large sunny room overlooking the gardens of Carlton House Terrace, which he furnished as a "bed-sitting room". He described it in a letter to W. E. Norris on December 23, 1900: "My cell is spacious, southern, looking over Carlton [House Terrace] Gardens, and tranquil, utterly, and singularly well serviced and I find I can work there, there being ample margin for a typewriter and its priest, or priestess." The Reform Club thus became James's London home, where he spent varying intervals until 1912, though he did not actually cease to be a tenant of the Club until January, 1913. To this abode Henry James evidently became attached, for after he ceased to live at the Club, more than once he called on the chamberlain so that he might be allowed to look again at his old room.

James used to come into the dining room of the Reform Club for his breakfast regularly about nine o'clock. He knew few members, and he was not one of those who open a conversation with his neighbor on the subjects which are to be found in the daily papers. His reading of the morning paper was short, and thereafter he sat in silence. But when he had finished his meal, and before he started on the literary work of the day, he was usually ready for a few minutes' conversation. A chance and ordinary remark would set flowing a stream of acute, humorous, sometimes pathetic, observations. One recognized in such conversations the causes of his obscurity as a writer. He seemed overwhelmed by crowding thoughts which he found a difficulty in reducing into definite phrases. But since words in conversation are capable of change, as well as of immediate addition or explanation, especially if aided by a helpful interruption from the listener, the result was always memorable. It



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was impossible to leave these brief, often daily talks without an overwhelming sense of the extraordinary insight of the man, and of his abounding human kindness. To one of James's sensitive nature with his brooding temperament life must have had many painful periods. He was melancholy, was the opinion formed of him by the Club servant who attended to him well and appreciatively during his tenancy in the Reform Club. A desire to combat this feeling was perhaps one reason why he was so willing to take part in sociable meetings. More than once he came to a small and anything but highbrow tea party which, from a purely intellectual point of view, could have been of little interest to him. In fact I sometimes wonder how James, who was certainly easily bored, was either willing or able to pass so much time in social gatherings.

When his breakfast or morning talk was finished, James disappeared upstairs, where his room had been prepared and where his typist awaited him, and here he would spend the morning and sometimes part of the afternoon. Occasionally, but not regularly, he appeared again in the Club — at rather a late hour — for dinner. He would take his coffee in the quiet gallery which overhangs the fine central hall and talk for a short time if there was anyone he knew, but usually he sat there for a brief space only with an evening paper.

Henry James and the Reform Club are a singular connection, for he was little in sympathy with the life, political, legal, or commercial, of the majority of the members of that respectable society. He liked it — in his later life at any rate — rather as a convenient residence than for its opportunities of association with other men. A last impression of him is as it were a vignette — James standing on the entrance steps of the Club about to descend into Pall Mall. Some chance remark about travel, it may have been the return from a Continental holiday or a project about to be carried out, brought forth a humorous and pathetic statement that he should not travel again. He spoke of the weak state of his heart, and then he added with a laughing glance that the difficulty and worry of knowing the right tips to give to the hotel porters disturbed his heart too much, and he tapped his chest with his fingers. This last little picture is suggestive, for it seems to emphasize James's pleasant personality and his humorous view of situations which would make most of us grumble. Certainly in James's life his sense of the humorous aspects of the social scene around him must have saved him from many intolerable and sad moments which were otherwise inevitable for one of his sensitive and perceptive temperament.

## PIERRE MACORLAN

By Malcolm Cowley

*With a Drawing from Life by Ivan Opffer*

IT is only since the recent translation of "On Board the Morning Star" that its author has been known to the American public. In France, however, Pierre MacOrlan's reputation has been growing constantly. He writes adventure stories which are brief, rapid, and cruel; which are fantastic to the extreme and curiously matter of fact. Evidently they are hard to describe or to category. They move so swiftly

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as to shame the moving pictures, but there is nothing cinematographic about them; they belong definitely to literature. They are praised by even the most difficult of French critics and read even by the crowd. But literature is hardly a paying profession in France. . . . MacOrlan has also an avocation, which he has found more profitable. He introduces contemporary foreign authors to the French public.

It is commonly said that the French are familiar with no literature except their own. On the contrary, they are eager to read foreign books. Translations appear by the hundreds: from the Russian, from the German, and, since the war especially, from the English. One of the largest publishing houses in Paris — La Renaissance du Livre — likes to be known as the home of international literature, and MacOrlan is literary adviser to them, supervising their foreign department.

I asked him to talk about his own novels, but he preferred to discuss the problem of translation. "To render a book from one language into another has curious effects," he said, "and nobody can forecast them, least of all the publisher." His brown eyes lighted suddenly as they do when any subject catches his interest — in other words, about four fifths of the time.

"Translation rejuvenates an author. Take Kipling for example. In England he begins to date; he is hardly considered a member of the youngest generation. Simply by translation into French he becomes a new and terrific force; a French author who imitates him is considered unconventional and extremely modern. In the same way I understand that English authors who wish to be twenty years ahead of their time are imitating the early works of Remy de Gourmont."

"But your own books?" I interrupted.

"Translation declasses an author; I mean that it gives him entirely different values. He gains or loses. A labored stylist is at a disadvantage; most of his virtues disappear in another language. Nothing survives intact except the matter and the movement. If the movement is rapid an author is easy to translate. Jack London is better known in France, even among intellectuals, than Henry James.

"Each nation has its particular psychology, but a punch on the jaw is international.

"As one might expect, the American books which find the widest sale in France are novels of action and adventure. Mark Twain, Bret Harte, James Oliver Curwood, Nick Carter, Stewart Edward White, Upton Sinclair: the list is curious. We have also published a book of short stories by Ambrose Bierce; I admire him and have often wondered why he wasn't more popular in America."

He paused a brief moment to catch his breath; only to listen to him I had lost my own.

"Translation is becoming less and less of a task because the style of recent authors is as international as the Orient Express or the cut of a dinner jacket. Consider Paul Morand. His "Ouvert la Nuit" was published only a couple of years ago. Today there is a Spaniard who writes like Paul Morand, a German who writes like Paul Morand, a Swiss and an Englishman who resemble him. Not only their style but their subject matter is international. In this respect they are the opposite of Anatole France, for example, who was as purely Gallic as a vineyard in Touraine. France typified the novelists

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Drawn from life for THE BOOKMAN by Ivan Opffer

*Pierre MacOrlan*



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of thirty years ago; Morand is the type of the present."

I interrupted him again. "But your own books. . . . Have you been influenced by any of the American novelists you mention?"

He considered. "By Jack London, perhaps; certainly not by the others. They are too recent. . . . My great passion in English literature has been the minor Elizabethan dramatists: Webster and Ford especially. I was fascinated by their gorgeous cruelty and by their fashion, both exotic and matter of fact, of creating the atmosphere of tragedy. Critics have found the same qualities in my own work.

"Another quality which I respect in English and American authors, even the second-raters, is their fear of sentiment, their delicacy about personal affairs. I mean, if the wife of a French novelist proves unfaithful, he writes a novel around his cuckoldry; he sells, if possible, 150,000 copies of his secret heart. On the contrary an Englishman consoles himself by drinking, or by taking a trip to Africa and maybe writing a book of travels. I admire his reticence, and under the circumstances I should copy it." He chuckled at the idea, thus proving himself more Gallic than his name.

"I could safely attribute this much to my reading of Anglo-Saxon authors. But nobody could measure exactly the literary influences which have been brought to bear on me. A novelist is a sort of filter." (He began to draw a rapid diagram.) "A book, a house, a horse, a gun are ladled into his head, and there they are dissolved. They emerge not in their own shape but as a sort of transparent intellectual fluid which, in the case of an original author, has the peculiar color of his own personality. That fluid is poured into the mold of a book, and books have an existence entirely separate from the world of things. . . . I could certainly never tell you how many of my sources were American or English; how many were Russian or German.

"In my novel 'Malice', for example, I dealt with Germany since the war. Beyond the Rhine today there is a tragically interesting phenomenon: a nation in a state of moral decomposition, praying to the East for a regenerating force which will probably never come. Germany, like the rest of Europe, wavers on the edge of an abyss, but it is a few feet, a few years nearer to disaster. France and England are wavering too; they have perhaps twenty years of safety. The bulwark of the present order is America.

"Partly for this reason I expect more and more books to reach us from the United States. If the French publishing business were not traversing a period of peculiar difficulty, we should be printing twice as many. In spite of everything a great number of American books are being published: Thoreau, Hawthorne, Waldo Frank, Gertrude Atherton; to say nothing of those I mentioned already, or of authors more familiar to us, like Cooper, the grandfather of adventure novels in France, or Poe and Whitman, who are at the basis of a large part of modern French poetry.

"Speaking of poetry, I often think that American poets are more highly rated in France than at home. Take for example this anthology of contemporary foreign poets which we recently published. Its largest division, containing nineteen poems, is devoted to the Anglo-Saxon world. Of these poems three are Irish and four English, while twelve are American. I imagine that the English critics are shocked, and perhaps even some of your own."

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He handed me the volume, "Les Cinq Continents". It was edited by Ivan Goll. The American translations (they were excellent) had been written by Léon Bazalgette, the French authority on Whitman. He selected three poems by Sandburg, two by Masters, two by Pound. Amy Lowell, Vachel Lindsay, Orrick Johns, James Oppenheim, and Sherwood Anderson had each a poem to represent them. Their united work was both more various and more homogeneous than I had expected; it was not unworthy of a nation. . . . Curiously enough, the four English poems were not purely English. One of them, certainly not the least important, was written by T. S. Eliot!

"We like American poets", said MacOrlan, hammering the ashes from his Anglo-Saxon pipe.

## A VISIT WITH MASEFIELD

By Charles Hanson Towne

I HAD been at Oxford with some friends for several days, when suddenly I remembered that John Masefield lived at Boar's Hill, just a little way out in the country; and I wondered why I had not thought of this before. Robert Nichols used to speak to me of the little colony they had — Masefield, Bridges, Gilbert Murray, and a few others.

With a young friend who happened along, I took a bus, and then walked at least a mile and a half, inquiring all the way if we were on the right road to the poet's house. Yes, we were — keep straight on; second house to your right beyond that hill. It was hot and dusty. No rain had fallen for days and the panorama of the valley which spread at our feet when we reached the crest of the hill seemed burning up. The grass was like straw. The view, in normal times, must be enchanting. Today it made my heart ache.

There was his house, at last! A simple enough dwelling, the grounds of which we entered through a little gate. It was not unlike many of our suburban dwellings, with no pretense, no anxiety to be greatly different from other houses roundabout.

Yes, the poet was at home; would we step in, the maid said in answer to our query. We simply sent word by her that two American pilgrims, whose names did not matter, would like to say Good day to a writer they had long admired.

The message came back that Mr. Masefield would be happy to see us shortly; but he was at work. I wondered if we had interrupted the composition of a sonnet, and I was not pleased to be the blunt instrument which would thus cut off a magical line. "But he always comes down for tea", the maid explained; and made us comfortable in the drawing room. We looked about. The model of a ship first caught my attention. The author of "Dauber" would be certain to make one with his own hands. Then paintings of his boy and girl also held us, as well as a portrait of himself. A few books, a littered desk, a hospitable fireplace and inviting chairs — these were enough to make the room cosy and livable. Suddenly, through a French window behind us, Mrs. Masefield came in "from feeding the hens", she laughed. Her husband would be in soon. He was putting some nails in a box in the barn. So it was not a poem we had interrupted!

I told her how, on my first visit to England twelve years ago, I had read

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"The Everlasting Mercy" on a park bench in Chester, on my way to my steamer. The tattered copy of "The English Review" was passed from one end of the boat to the other; and when I got to New York I told a reporter who had come to interview Andrew Carnegie that I had a far more important piece of news for him: a new poet had arrived in England; and I gave him the torn magazine. In print, later, he agreed with me. And so did the whole world. Mrs. Masefield's eyes filled with tears as I told her this; and I recalled how I had, after a year, written myself to her husband to tell him of my joy in his poetry. "Did I answer?" said a deep voice behind me. And I turned to see our poet, smiling, his face sunburned, his tired eyes lighted by some divine inner fire.

"You did", I said. "I'm glad of that", he replied. And we all sat down and talked of America. I had heard Masefield lecture during the war; and he had looked then as if the weight of the world were upon his shoulders. His voice had been weary and far away. But now he looked rested and five years younger, and the resiliency had come back to his voice.

"I love America — those busy, teeming cities like Chicago and Kansas City. And New York is wonderful. It's so glorious to do as you do there — when you don't like a street you tear it down and build it over again! I have often wondered at Americans constantly coming over here to see our ancient crumbling walls, our worn out relics, when your youth and fire and fervor are so much more worthwhile."

My young friend, who had been "doing" Europe for a year, and doing it thoroughly, looked amazed. But of course, lover of young and growing cities that I am, Masefield's words were a lyric in my ears.

"It is true", he went on. "You have so much of energy to give, so much that is inspiring and new and that plays its part in the world, you know."

He liked American audiences; but the long journeys tired him, and interfered with his work of writing; and he was not sure when he would tour the States again. But when he does come, Mrs. Masefield is coming with him. She has never been. America will be as cordial to her as it has been to her husband.

They urged us to stay for tea; but a boom of thunder echoed far off, and the first rain of the summer began to sing in the garden, and we said we must run for our bus. Another guest had come in; so we hurried to the road, Masefield showing us to the flower decked gate, and waving us goodby. He looked like a ghost in his suit of white linen — but a healthy, normal ghost, as normal as those robust songs of the sea he has sung so well.

My young friend and I felt better for our brief visit; and as we trudged through the tapping storm, I quoted, "The days that make us happy make us wise."

## WALT WHITMAN'S SISTER

By Nellie Doty Butts

"WALT WHITMAN'S yawps!" Ye gods! A man of remarkable genius, absorbing interest, with a mind imaginative, creative, constructive, sounding his "barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world". . . .

THE BOOKMAN slipped unheeded to

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the floor while memory raced at the rate of sixty five miles an hour on that glum, hurlyburly Sunday to the Queen City of the north, peerless old New England town, resonant with voice of wind and wave; with the sterling patriotism of poet, philosopher, historian, romancer, each and all attesting to staunch democracy — the democracy of Walt Whitman and of the north.

Burlington is built on a long sloping hill extending from the water edge to the University of Vermont, backed on the east by the rugged grandeur of the snow crowned mountian peaks of the Green Ridge. On a high bluff overlooking Lake Champlain, not far from the guarded entrance to Battery Park, in bare, spacious grounds stands a simple frame house painted a bright vermilion.

For years this was the home of Walt Whitman's widowed sister. In this quiet retreat the poet spent many summers, withdrawing almost daily to some secluded nook on the steep, brambly bank west of Battery Park where he would sit for hours looking out over a wide expanse of sparkling, rippling water.

I sit and look out upon all the sorrows of the world, and upon all oppression and shame; . . .
All the meanness and agony without end, I sitting, look out upon.
See, hear, and am silent.

After the death of her husband, an artist of more than local fame, Mrs. Hyde lived in strict seclusion.

"It will be more than useless for you to attempt to interview Mrs. Hyde. She admits no one except Jennie Stacy, and one or two other intimate friends", advised one who knew the recluse well. . . .

The hour spent with Walt Whitman's sister "'twas more than worth my while". Her face was furrowed with time. Her grey hair was a bit untidy. The meagre remnants of a late feast spread on a small table by the east window, as well as her grey print gown, torn at the wrist, betokened poverty. Two large oil paintings on the wall, portraying the beauty and charm of Vermont landscape under her husband's brush, several magazines of no recent date, and half a dozen books indicated past comfort and more than one luxury.

"I have seen Walt sit for hours by that west window looking silently out over the lake, but my brother never depicts nature save incidentally as it leads to greater truths", explained Mrs. Hyde as she sought to cull from memory's circle the dominant, determining influences in Walt Whitman's life.

"Walt never lived in the country", she resumed, "save for a few short years when he lived at West Hills, Long Island. Father afterward moved to Brooklyn. I have sometimes thought that this may explain what has so often perplexed the most enthusiastic of my brother's biographers. At least, one had this in mind when he wrote, 'Cities, arts, occupations, manufactures, have a larger place in Walt Whitman's poetry than rivers or prairies.'

"More than one has attempted to write my brother's biography, but Walt was always partial to 'Johnson's Life of Walt Whitman'. The book is not in print now. As far as I know I have the only copy that remains."

Mrs. Hyde threw open the north door, entered a darkened room, and returned with a dust covered volume in her hand. It was an autographed copy of "Johnson's Life of Walt Whitman", a gift from "the good grey poet" to his sister.

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What did "Johnson's Life of Walt Whitman" contain that appealed so forcibly to the poet? Who has that autographed copy? If Johnson's appeal was without limitation was it not due to the writer's enthusiastic reception of Whitman's democracy, "the purport and aim of all the past"?

"Walt's work in the hospitals brought him in close contact with all sorts and conditions of life. I sometimes regret this. My brother was a man of generous impulses, keen sympathies. He entered into each individual conflict with a gentleness, a tenderness, that was part of his daily life, but he gave mercilessly, insistently, of his own power and strength. I know that more than one life was made larger through Walt."

"Did your brother's experience in the hospitals have a depressing influence on his life, or on the great central message which he wished to leave with the world?"

"Quite the contrary. In the suffering and the endurance of others Walt always found reason for hope. I believe that he pierced the gloom, and in the commonplace, everyday life about him discovered channels which led to poetry, music, art."

Across the lake the sun was dipping behind distant mountain peaks. Not a sound penetrated the erratic twilight dusk of the New England hills. Within the sombre dwelling no one stirred, "not even a mouse". Mrs. Hyde was the first to speak.

"Robert Ingersoll was my brother's firm friend, but they never discussed politics or religion. Mr. Ingersoll was in northern Canada when Walt died, but he traveled day and night to reach Camden, New Jersey, in time for the funeral."

Again Mrs. Hyde left the room. The sound of a step on the stairs, the tread of a foot overhead, warned me that she was making a pilgrimage to her Holy of Holies. She returned bearing in her hand a magazine, and one or two old letters. She turned the pages slowly, almost with a caress, until she found what she sought, a biographical sketch of Walt Whitman published years before, I do not recall in what magazine. From my recollections of the size and cover I believe it to have been a "Munsey" or a "McClure".

"Democracy is an art, and to this art Walt devoted his life. And his critics say that my brother left no message", she added regretfully. . . .

A week ago I dropped into the comfortable dimensions of a large rocker in the library of a friend. Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" occupied a foremost place on the table. On the flyleaf were written these words:

S——, dear,
Whitman seems to me the greatest of American poets, sounding the deepest deeps.

F——.

Has Whitman no message? I reread Symonds's words: "This recognition of the noble and the lovely qualities in human life, the qualities upon which pure poetry and art must seize, is due partially to what we call democracy. But it implies something more than it is commonly supposed to denote, a new and more deeply religious way of looking at mankind, a gradual triumph after so many centuries of the spirit which is Christ's; an enlarged faculty for piercing externals; for perceiving the essence and the truth of things. . . . To Walt Whitman belongs the elegy of the heroic."

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# GETTING INTO SIX FIGURES

## By Arnold Patrick

### II: JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

IF you consider the character of the inhabitants of Cape Cod essentially New England, it is perhaps difficult to understand the continued and consistent success of Joseph Lincoln's stories of Cape Cod folk. Why should local color stories of a small section of America be received with enthusiasm in Australia? I mention Australia because Mr. Lincoln told me the other day that many of the most interesting letters in his huge correspondence come from that far distant part of the British Empire. He recalled particularly a mail friendship, during the war, with an Australian captain who wrote him long and detailed accounts of his activities from the front line.

"The really honest letters from readers are one of the finest rewards of a writer", said Mr. Lincoln, and went on to tell me of others, some inspiring, some pathetic, some entertaining, and some, of course, annoying. It is not, however, in Australia alone that his breezy, homely, witty stories are read. They are read all over the world.

Isn't the secret of their popularity the fact that, in addition to being well done, they deal with folk who represent a curious mingling of the qualities that appeal to most of us? Cape Cod people are, in the first place, of the sea — sailors, fishermen, life savers — and a love of the sea is universal. Yet they till their own soil. They are of the farm, and there are few of us who can go back many generations without finding a sturdy grower of grain among our forebears. Then, if you look carefully into their ancestry, in certain localities of the cape you'll detect a touch of "Injun" blood. Perhaps that is why they are so fond of their own folk lore and legendry.

Yet New England contributes more definitely, too, to Mr. Lincoln's success, in my opinion. Where, after all, do most midwesterners come from? Old New England. Most far westerners? Old New England. And in Mr. Lincoln's people these pioneers and descendants of pioneers recognize their own characteristics and those of their ancestors.

Above all, though, Mr. Lincoln's stories are of the home, they are of home loving people, and that fact constitutes an appeal without limit of country.

Isn't that why, from the very first, Mr. Lincoln's books have sold well; why every new book sells more than the preceding one; why he has had little trouble in reaching the 100,000 class, in "getting into six figures"?

Mr. Lincoln could not write of these people as he does if he were not of them. The characters in "Cap'n Eri", in "The Postmaster", in "The Portygee", in "Rugged Water", and more than a dozen other volumes are beyond the shadow of a doubt authentic. So is their author. Short, robust, stout enough to be jolly yet not stout enough to be called fat, ruddy of complexion, enjoying a good story and telling many good ones, proud of his



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family, fond of his friends, wholesome, honest, interested in the world at large, he is obviously a Yankee, and a Cape Cod Yankee at that! And that Yankee habit of story telling is the reason, probably, why he is one of the best of American authors to read aloud. He knows perfectly how to compress an incident so as to make a dramatic and a pointed anecdote.

What can we learn of becoming a successful writer from Joseph Lincoln's career? Again, as in the case of Zane Grey, we find that the recipe lies in living enthusiastically and working hard; that no special training makes the great story teller.

"The things I have done in my life have always been the unexpected things, those for which I had really not planned at all", Mr. Lincoln told me laughingly; but most of us would add to that statement the belief that success has followed because he has taken advantage of those unexpected opportunities.

Mr. Lincoln is, first of all, like so many other writers, a product of the sea. Chance alone kept him from being a sea captain as were all his ancestors, great-grandfathers, grandfathers, uncles, cousins. His father, Joseph Lincoln, was a captain also. His mother had often voyaged with her husband. She, too, knew the sweep of storm and the shine of phosphorous in a still sea; in fact, she was planning to join Captain Lincoln when he was taken sick of a fever and died in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1871. The son was then a year old. Brewster, Massachusetts, was their home village; but they soon moved nearer Boston, where the boy went to school. His spare hours he spent with the local fishermen, and in the life saving stations along the coast. Here are still to be seen the old records of adventures, in cramped hands, strange dialect, but with a power of their own, ably transcribed now by Mr. Lincoln in "Rugged Water".

Although young Joe was a sportsman and an out-of-door boy, although he liked to go out in boats, to fish, to swim, the dramatic instinct, and the artistic, showed in him early. He built himself a toy theatre. From R. L. S. backward and forward, this has been a childhood amusement of authors, artists, and playwrights, you'll find. Lincoln built his miniature structure, painted his scenes and characters, wrote his own plays and put them on. In a darkened room he would raise the small curtain and behold his own stories come to life for him. Long after the proper age for toys he indulged in this pastime. Finally, he feared this was an occupation not befitting a man.

"You know why I gave up my toy theatre?" he questioned. I nodded, laughing. "Well, I guess lots of youngsters have given up things like that because they thought other youngsters or their elders wouldn't understand."

His family were practically minded for him. He was to be trained for business, and, being a dutiful son, he turned his mind wholly in that direction. College was impossible for him. His son, who intends to be a writer, has just completed his college course, and I wondered how he felt about university training for writers.

"I'm sorry that I didn't go to college", he confessed.

I protested a trifle at that, and asked him if he didn't think academic training sometimes took the edge off the natural ability to tell a story well, if it didn't tend to make writers self conscious and over-literary?

"Perhaps", he admitted, "But it's

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the friendships, the associations of college, that are important. I'm glad that my son was graduated successfully. He's being a reporter on a Philadelphia paper now. That will give him the practical side of writing."

Mr. Lincoln himself never had any actual reportorial experience. He started his business career early, in a broker's office. This work, he says, he disliked. He has been quoted as stating: "I have always felt that they were as glad to get rid of me as I was to leave them." Feeling, however, that it would have been difficult for Mr. Lincoln actually to fail at anything, I pressed this point, and he told me how he lost his first job.

The firm, it appears, had one of those annoying reorganizations which business men know so well, when most of the working force suddenly find themselves without jobs. He, however, was one of the few retained. This pleased him very much, in a way; and proves to our satisfaction his business ability. However, it created something like over-confidence in his breast. He went to his employer, since times were hard and wages slim, and asked for a raise. The raise was not forthcoming. Mr. Lincoln left to seek other fields of endeavor.

Since the days of the toy theatre he had always wanted to draw. He took lessons of Henry Sandham ("Hy"), a prominent illustrator and caricaturist of that period. In Boston he and a friend set out to make their art commercial. They took an office and attempted to sell their pictures. With these pictures, Mr. Lincoln sometimes sent along a verse or a bit of humorous prose, and presently discovered to his surprise that the literature was better than the art. It was, again, the unexpected. Even more unexpected was his next position.

"Everyone, except myself, was riding a bicycle in those days", he told me. "So knowing nothing of bicycling I found myself associate editor of 'The League of American Wheelmen Bulletin'. I did the illustrations for the magazine." And he added, under his breath, "They were pretty dreadful pictures, too."

Never having seen the pictures, one cannot give an opinion. The verses of those days, though, were good. They were salty and amusing, they had a fine swing and were filled with homely philosophy. While Mr. Lincoln was holding his editorial position, he kept busy nights writing, and had moderate success in placing his material. His first short story appeared in "The Saturday Evening Post", his verses were to be found in various magazines, among them "Puck", of which Harry Leon Wilson was then editor. That veteran humorist's kindliness and cordiality to him, he remembers with gratitude; for when he finally broke away from Boston in 1899 and came to New York City, it was his verses that made friends for him among writers and editors.

He had married in 1897, and even in those days the sale of poetry and an occasional short story proved precarious living on which to support a family. It is much better, Mr. Lincoln believes, for the young writer with dependents to have some source of regular income. It leaves the mind freer for good work, if there is a weekly pay check to stave off major worries. If there isn't enough vitality in a man's creative impulse to survive a daily job, to write in spite of everything, he'd better not write at all. Study the careers of writers, and I think you'll agree with him that if a man is destined to be a success in the world of

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editors and magazines he will turn out his copy in spite of everything, that not even the exigencies of desk work by day can stop him.

Again it was the unexpected.

"Knowing little of banking, I found myself in the office of the American Institute of Bankers", he told me. This institution, in those days starting on a small scale, has since turned into the large and well known Junior Bankers of America. Mr. Lincoln here acted in the capacity of secretary, combined with duties which would now be termed, I presume, "publicity".

"Never having made a speech," he went on, "I was sent to Cincinnati to talk on banking and the Association."

This was his first public speech, and he admits that he was filled with confusion. Would he be able to hold his audience, to convince them of what he had to say? He is glad now that such an opportunity came to him, for it gave him confidence and taught him something of how to interest people. Since then, he has delivered hundreds of lectures. His anecdotal talk on "Cape Cod Folks" has delighted men and women all over America. For the most part, he now enjoys lecturing, although it is harder work than writing, in his opinion — "takes more out of you!"

Living in the suburbs at Hackensack — which is still his winter home — he found time for much hard work turning out verses and short stories. His first book, "Cape Cod Ballads", was published in 1902. He now found that his income warranted giving over the regular office routine, and he made the profession of writing his only one.

His first novel, "Cap'n Eri", was greeted with enthusiasm and some critical praise, and from then on his success as a writer of fiction was assured. His is character fiction, he explains:

"My situations always develop from a set of characters. I suppose I could construct more of a plot than I do, if I wanted to; but that's not my kind of writing. I am interested, first and foremost, in the people of whom I write."

And it is his people, rather than his situations, that we remember: Cap'n Eri, Galusha, Albert, Solomon Pratt, Keziah Coffin. What they do does not so much matter as does the sort of person they are and how they set about doing what they do.

Mr. Lincoln likes to write joyfully. He writes, in a sense, psychological stories — character novels must have a modicum of psychology in them — but he dislikes morbidity and he sees the bright side of human nature. He has often made it plain that he likes to write tales with happy endings and that he considers it his privilege to do so. Eugene O'Neill chooses to write of New Englanders and sea folk on the verge of insanity. Joseph Lincoln chooses the eminently sane. Each of these types of story is perfectly true; if anything, I think O'Neill's is the more exaggerated, although by such exaggeration often he achieves great tragic beauty, just as Mr. Lincoln by slight exaggeration achieves sparkling humor. Such departures from literal reality are an author's privilege, and it is his use of them that creates manner and style. When New York critics, as they did recently in reviewing a play, occupy themselves with long discussions of the inbred and decaying New England character, Mr. Lincoln must find himself much entertained. Doubtless, in his Cape villages, he has seen many delightful homely happenings and few examples of murder and incest.

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I am not defending Joseph Lincoln's characters. They need no defense. Even if they were entirely untrue to Cape Cod characteristics they would be worthwhile in themselves. What I am trying to point out is that in these days of psychological meandering on the part of authors, it is a relief to find an author as wholesome as Joseph Lincoln — and that the very fact that it is the *wholesome* authors which the public rewards by wide sales proves the fundamental soundness of the public mind. There are occasional novels of a sensational character that reach sales beyond the 100,000 mark; but on no such reputation can a steady and continuing sale for an author be builded. It is not the caller who excites us by walking around the ceiling whom we most like to see. In the long run, the dependable and quietly humorful guest is most welcomed.

Mr. Lincoln's methods of work are simple. His material is a part of him, and he does not need to go far afield to collect it. He spends his summers on Cape Cod, and many of his stories are undoubtedly compounds of tales he still hears there or remembers from his youth. He has claimed that he never puts a real character into his books, that they are all mixtures of people he has known. Before he wrote "Rugged Water" he traveled up and down the Massachusetts coast seeking the retired life savers and consulting them about ways and means during the heyday of the old service.

He writes in the mornings, with stern instructions for no interruptions, which Mrs. Lincoln carries out with determination. A writer's family must be not only a family, it must be a bulwark. It must learn to be silent and to fight for silence. After all, it is on the family's conduct that livelihood partly depends. I know one young author who has taught his baby the sacredness of the typewriter by telling him that this is the machine on which papa grinds out pennies. The dishonesty of such education may be questioned; but at least it is a protection for the typewriter until the young man decides to try grinding for himself.

Mr. Lincoln works longer on a novel than many of our popular story writers, for it takes him about six months to complete a manuscript. He writes with a soft pencil on large sheets of paper. This is an interesting point to note. Few writers, unless they began their career in newspaper offices of a somewhat late date, can "think on a typewriter". There is no rule for ways of putting thought to paper. Some academicians might frown at learning that a novelist dictated his stories. Do they frown when they learn that Joseph Conrad dictated his?

So, in Hackensack or at Cape Cod, Joseph Lincoln writes his gay novels. When he is not writing, he is playing golf or fishing or taking a part in the interests of the community or his family's pleasures. It has become usual to say that a well known novelist is modest or shy. Joseph Lincoln is not shy; but he is, beyond any shadow of a doubt, one of the most modest men I have ever met — and one of the most wholehearted. Good luck to him! May every new book go on selling more copies than the last, until Cape Cod and its Lincoln characters are as permanent a part of our legendry as Washington and his cherry tree.

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# THE LONDONER

*Literary Excitement—Young Critics and Established Reputations—Pett Ridge and the Modest Authors—The "Daily Mirror"—Compton Mackenzie—James Stephens's New Book—"The Old Ladies"—The Clergy and the Novel.*

LONDON, *December* 1, 1924.

WE are now at the end of the year, and I fear there is very little to be said for the year as far as its book production goes. It has ended, as last year did, in an election, and we are confronted with a winter in which old books will probably be the chief solace of house ridden shelterers from the gale and the season. To one or two of the newer books I shall refer later, but for the moment I must confine myself to other matters. In the first place we have been having a little excitement in literary London, owing to the fact that somebody has said the unsayable in print. As all readers of literary gossip already know, one must not anywhere indicate that one thinks any writer is worthless. It is one of the conventions of the newspaper world that this is as little to be done as that other heinous sin of the unpractised reviewer — the admission that he has not read every book by the author whose work he happens to be criticizing. One must not say, that is, "This is the worst book by Mr. Sprout that we have read." One must say, "the worst that we *remember*". Similarly, one must not say — in print — that Mr. Sprout is a thoroughly bad writer. One must say, "In this book, Mr. Sprout's gift is seen at something less than its best." This dictum, of course, relates solely to a newly published book. When it has been "lived down", and when the author has written something that can be praised, one may refer to any of his past work in the strongest terms of reprobation. The facts are strange, but they are true. "Live and let live", which is my own gospel, is also the gospel of the reviewer. He attacks only those whom he knows his words cannot injure financially. This is why a poor first novel is always treated more tenderly than a mediocre fifth novel, and why a mediocre fifth novel will always command more praise than a good twelfth novel, and a good twelfth novel more praise than a first class twentieth novel. At novel number twenty, the author must regard himself or herself as fair game for the youngest critic of all. He will be attacked with fury, as an impostor. He will be blackguarded all over the place. The generation that first discovered his gifts will have left the reviewing business, as the remaining members of the old guard will be sunk in lethargy. They will not come to his aid. He must expect no mercy. All those who are young enough to know everything will be upon his trail. Then, indeed, it will be possible for a critic to say that the author is no good.

We have just had an illustration of this fact in a review which has been written (I am told by a very confident, but not usually very offensive, critic by name H. C. Harwood) of May Sinclair's new novel. Mr. Harwood



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has explicitly declared that Miss Sinclair has never been a good writer and that she will never write a good novel. If Mr. Harwood had said this of a male writer, I doubt if we should have heard anything more about his comment; but "a petticut, sir, a petticut, sir, is irrevokeable", as the gentleman said in the "Pickwick Papers", and there has been a fuss. Hugh Walpole has written to the paper in which the review appeared, to protest against so unwarrantable a condemnation. Other writers have taken the matter up. And there are always the talkers who busy themselves upon all manner of curious subjects.

The rights or wrongs of the controversy do not much interest me: it would be easy to say of many writers, living and dead, that their work is without value. But there is one aspect of this constant attack upon older writers by younger critics which has a general interest. Mr. Harwood may or may not be right in his estimates, and the only point at issue is whether he should have said in print that which he would be free to declare in private. I have nothing to say upon this incident, and in any case my opinion of Miss Sinclair's work is of no importance. But on the general question — leaving Miss Sinclair and Mr. Harwood to settle their differences as best they may — I sometimes wonder whether we are not getting too much of this warfare upon established reputations. The attacks of young critics are based upon the taste of their moment. Reputations are based upon the judgment of others. From the venom (not real venom, but apparent) of certain of the newer estimates it is clear that the critics in some degree suppose authors with any reputation to be criminals. No profiteer receives such savage treatment as does a supposedly successful writer whose new book does not give satisfaction. One would think that all writers of reputation were wicked fellows who had become bloated as the result of strange cunning of their own. That they had, in fact, exploited the innocent public until this crusading critic had come to set matters right. Nothing could be more false. I never yet met a thoroughly self satisfied writer. As a rule, if a writer shows conceit his offensiveness is due to failure, to a sense that he has not received recognition for his talent. Once recognition is accorded (and serious recognition is rarely given to any writer unless his personality is such as to arrest the judgment of good critics) the writer as a rule, I believe, becomes both modest and self distrustful. His estimate of his own talent is a low one. I would hazard the guess — although I do not know the lady — that Miss Sinclair's estimate of her talent is a low one. The more reason, you may say, for expressing honest convictions about the lowness of that same talent. Well, I do not think so. I do not think critics generally speaking have enough imagination to see an author and his work in true perspective. Assuming, as they do, that the author is in some disgusting way to blame for his reputation, our young critics attack with the bludgeon. The author is not to blame for his reputation. He has done the work — true. It is or is not the best he can do. But what has made him stand out from other authors is his personality. His personality and his energy have combined to set forth a number of volumes. The volumes are to be estimated. They can be analyzed, and individual volumes as they appear can be appraised. Any assumption that an individual

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critic's opinion will make or destroy a reputation may be at once dismissed. For that purpose criticism is without value during the lifetime of any writer. What counts is the general judgment of the readers of the book or books of the author. (This, by the way, is what makes the chronic boosting of young talents by their friends the young reviewers so horribly ineffective.)

But the critic will not believe that. He is out to gratify his own love of hitting heads. He really does, in good faith, think his opinion worth more than the facts warrant. And, so strangely is the human being affected by what he reads, he is at war with that very personality which other, and earlier, critics have acclaimed. This fact it is which gives the touch of hostility (which I earlier called "venom") to his attacks upon the established author. A mature personality always has this disturbing effect upon an immature personality. The young are always impatient, if they can think and feel at all, with whatever is established. They think it is stationary, and that they have a new secret, a new wisdom never known in the world before. They institute, or would institute, changes. They are arrogant and they are at times offensive. They change nothing, because too often they cannot "deliver the goods" themselves. In the long run it is always open to those who are attacked to say, "Well, what is it you do yourself which is so much better than what you so greatly dislike?" Look at all the young critics when they sit down to the writing of books! Apart from their friends, and fellow young critics, who are bound to praise because it is a part of the game, who thinks that the work is good? Has the personality come through? I believe, in the majority of cases, it has not come through. The young critics, in fact, are not quite so good as they have thought. Sometimes they are merely immature in expression (for one can appraise the work of others with borrowed knowledge of life and art; but in what is called "creative" writing one is thrown back as never otherwise upon one's own personality, with all its limitations); sometimes they are all education and no gift. In years to come, they find — these latter — that they are no longer so young as they once were. They find that they have not the position to which their juvenile convictions made them suppose they were entitled. Then, indeed, there is a sterner note still in their attacks upon the successful writers. As A. A. Milne said the other day, "The unsuccessful writer's one comfort is that every successful writer is prostituting his art."

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Mr. Pett Ridge, a novelist who is less well known in America than he should be, has just been adding a footnote to this matter. He has been lecturing upon the subject of "The Modesty of Authors". He feels that authors do not make as much of themselves as they should do. Mr. Pett Ridge should know all about modesty, for when a common friend introduced him to Mark Twain as "the Mark Twain of England", Mr. Pett Ridge said to Twain: "No; he means that you are the Pett Ridge of America." Well, Mr. Pett Ridge has been looking up the entries of authors in "Who's Who", and he finds that they generally state only their names, the names before marriage of their wives, and the fact that they were educated "privately" (as a rule, by the way, when a man says in "Who's Who" that he was educated "privately" you may

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assume that he has had little or no education of the kind that is provided in schools). Mr. Pett Ridge suggests that public houses should be named after writers. Public houses, I may remark, for the benefit of American readers, are the uncomfortable drinking saloons of England, most of which are named either after national heroes or with some quaint title which would be more appropriate to a book. E.g. — "The Case is Altered", "The Boy and Donkey", "The World's End", etc. Presumably Mr. Pett Ridge would like to see the author regarded as a national hero. He will never see that event in England. England has too much political sagacity to name her authors as heroes. A soldier — yes; but not a novelist. So I fear we are unlikely to take refreshment at the "Masefield's Head" or the "Chesterton Arms", in spite of the fact that at the latter hostel the beer would most certainly be the best that is brewed.

* * * *

The "Daily Mirror", first English daily newspaper to be illustrated throughout with news photographs, is celebrating its twenty first birthday in a day or two. It seems incredible that the "Daily Mirror" is so old, and yet it is so familiar now that it has become almost a necessary part of the day's entertainment. Strange to reflect that the paper was started, not as a photographic newspaper, but as the first *woman's* newspaper. As such it was a failure, and when Lord Northcliffe realized the fact he took advantage of all the publicity the new periodical had had, threw overboard the whole scheme, had another, and like a weathercock switched sharply into the present style. The "Daily Mirror's" circulation is round about a million copies per day — a circulation that its New York rival, the name of which I have momentarily forgotten, would probably envy. It employs one of our cleverest caricaturists, Hasleden, to draw each morning a satirical comment (as a rule in six lozenge shaped pictures) upon some passing absurdity of fashion; and in "Pip, Squeak, and Wilfred" it has the only "strip" series (it is not strictly a "strip"; the arrangement of the drawings is a sort of double column) of British origin which can compare for fame with those fascinating records of the life of Andrew Gump and his wife. "Pip, Squeak, and Wilfred" are, respectively, a dog, a penguin, and a rabbit, and their doings have been invented for many years by a hidden hand whose name I believe is Lamb, and drawn by Austin B. Payne. Lamb I do not know, but Payne is a beaming, fair Welshman with an enormous voice and an incomprehensible accent, who was badly gassed in the war. Together, these collaborators have brought joy into many homes. It is only fair to say that although I personally adore the three "pets", there are others who regard them with dislike and almost horror. One of their greatest admirers (among those I know) is Compton Mackenzie, who is helping the "Daily Mirror" to celebrate its twenty first birthday by contributing to its pages the first chapters of a serial story called "Coral", a sequel to his old book, "Carnival". In this book, I understand, the respective children of the earlier Jenny Pearl and her rather lackadaisical lover play their parts. It will be interesting to see whether "Coral" repeats the success of "Carnival", which must by now have had, in one edition and another, a considerable sale. Its reception by the critics, of course, was immense. It

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was a reception such as no subsequent book by Mackenzie has had, the reason being that "Carnival" was his second novel, while all the others have been the work of a notably successful entertainer, who therefore must be looked at askance by critics.

* * * *

Mackenzie seems quite willing to be dubbed an entertainer. He thinks this is a very excellent description of himself, and of any novelist; and certainly if a book does not in some one form or another provide entertainment for its readers it must be regarded as no better than a textbook, which is no book at all. But I imagine that what Mackenzie means by "entertainment" and what his critics mean by the same word, is a matter which could be debated until death separated the combatants. The point to be made about Mackenzie is that he has a comic sense which none of his immediate rivals can match. It runs away with him at times, and at other times it deserts him, but that is a way the comic sense has. Perhaps that is why I shall always prefer Mackenzie as a raconteur to Mackenzie as a novelist. I do not know. Mackenzie can do some things better than most writers in the Victorian tradition. And it must be stated firmly that Mackenzie at his best is in the tradition of Smollett and Dickens, and of Fielding and Thackeray. More Thackeray than Dickens, admittedly, but still, at times, Dickens. I refer to such examples as the opening chapter of "The Seven Ages of Woman". Passages, also, in "Poor Relations" will assist the point, and for catch-as-catch-can humorous narrative, "Sylvia Scarlett". To "Sylvia Scarlett" and her sequel, "Sylvia and Michael", I must admit to being far from partial. But then neither do I care for the author's much praised "Guy and Pauline", which seems to me as sentimental as a family album, and as much faded. I think his best work is to be found in parts of "Carnival". It may be seen here and there in other books, but never when Mackenzie is writing "finely". In his "fine" writing he seems to me to be altogether too facile. I dread his "fine" writing. But his comic writing and his realistic writing seem to me to be very good. And his tale telling gift best of all. He is a born story teller. It is a delight to him to narrate, to embroider, to "create" something which has never really happened, but which *ought* to have happened. In a novelist this is a priceless gift. Mackenzie's new book, "The Old Men of the Sea" (strange that Hugh Walpole should be writing about "Old Ladies" at the same time as Mackenzie writes about "Old Men"), has been issued in an abridged form in a magazine, but the author assures me that the abridged version omits much that is of a nature not to be missed. By the time this article appears the book will no doubt have been upon the American market for some weeks, and I shall therefore not dwell upon it, except to say that the combination of the adventure story with comic narrative is a rare one in our rough island story. Mackenzie, I hear, has taken a house in Ireland, where he proposes to spend some time for the purpose of acquiring local "tone" for a new book. He has also become the owner for the first time in his life of a two seater automobile. I assume that his recent visit to Ireland as the guest of the government has suggested this fresh venture. At any rate, the outcome will be interesting to those who follow his work.

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Speaking of Ireland reminds me that I have just been reading James Stephens's new book, "In the Land of Youth". I am not competent to say much of this book, since I am not Irish, and since I am not acquainted with the leading legends of Ireland; but it seems to me to be very charming. In effect the book is a volume of interlocked fairy tales. There is the story of how Nera, out of courage, went to tie a withy about the foot of a man newly hanged; how the man was not dead, but was athirst; and how Nera gave him three buckets of water, returned him to the gallows, and found himself in the land of Faery. I shall not easily forget the last words of the hanging rogue. When he is strung up again upon his tree, he is asked how he feels. He says: "I feel splendid. I shall be dead in a jiffey." And from this point one is bathing in adorably humorous legends. I do not see how they can be called other than humorous, for they make me laugh. But they are absorbing also, largely because they have no trace of the apologetics of the modern realistic writer. In the world of these stories marvels are unquestioned. The mere statement of them is enough. There is none to say (as I am sorry to say that all readers of modern books are present to say): "But how could this be?" Mr. Stephens, or his original, can count upon credence. It is a beautiful and a refreshing thing to read stories in which marvels are natural, and gods the actors. I have enjoyed the book intensely for this quality as well as for Mr. Stephens's gift as a writer. As a matter of fact I have always been a reader and an admirer of Mr. Stephens's work, from the time that I first purchased a copy of the first edition of the author's "Insurrections". That first edition I no longer have (thanks, no doubt, to some unscrupulous borrower), but I possess instead, as consolation for its loss, a copy of the second edition, autographed by the author. I no longer own the first edition of "The Charwoman's Daughter", either, but this was a legitimate gift on my part to a deserving friend, and I do not expect any consolation for its loss. Stephens has something to do with the Dublin Art Gallery, where he works daily. He is thus to be included in the ranks of Civil Servants who are or have been distinguished writers. Of all of them I should put him among the first few, as one of the small body of men of our age (the smallness of the body is not peculiar to our own age, as some pessimists imagine) who have shown authentic signs of genius.

* * * *

Hugh Walpole's new novel, "The Old Ladies", seems to me to be one of his very best. In it the author has well in hand his newer and more colloquial style and also his dramatic effects. I have seen it suggested that the "happy" ending is a mistake, and that the book should have been left as tragedy. The suggestion is that the "happy" ending is forced. I cannot help thinking in this connection that Mr. Walpole has here shown himself wiser than his critics. The book is nowhere written as tragedy. It is written as a pathetic history. It is not strong enough for tragedy. If Mr. Walpole had wanted to write tragedy he would have made the whole situation more powerful. He has not sought to do so. He has deliberately kept the note subdued and gentle. It remains so to the end. Granted the interest of three old ladies living in the same house, I believe the book to be as well and as delicately done as

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it is possible for such a book to be. It seems to me to be much superior, both in conception and in invention, to "The Cathedral". In that book I thought the invention sometimes perfunctory, as if Mr. Walpole had taken an easy path, or as if he were tired of rejecting impracticable vehicles for his drama. It is not so here. The invention is throughout equal to the theme. This problem always presents to the writer a great difficulty which is never sufficiently appreciated by the reader. Often a writer will imagine a book as well as possible. But if his inventive faculty is weak he may lose all the value which he has derived from his imaginative gift. Most people think of invention as imagination, but that is a wrong notion altogether. Imagination is the quality in virtue of which scenes are made real to us. Invention is the quality which selects those scenes in preference to other possible scenes as the molds or frames into which the imagination is poured. Many able writers are ruined by their lack of inventive skill. It is in general a quality of Mr. Walpole's that his invention is adequate. The same statement applies to Mr. Mackenzie. It applies to Mr. Bennett, whose inventive capacity is what enables him to "get away" with all sorts of material which in other hands might seem uninteresting. Writers less able in this respect plod along, and unfortunately nothing seems to be happening in their chronicles of the lives of ordinary people. The quality is therefore of the utmost importance to a novelist who would enchain the attention of his readers. He may have as excellent ideas of what the novel should be as the most magnificent writers who ever lived. He may be a highly skilled reader of the human heart. He may be a stylist. But in the end he may be beaten because he simply does not know how to "make things happen". He falls back upon melodrama, or tries to get through with no story at all; and he meets with nothing but failure. I could mention several able writers of novels who have fallen short of the reward due to their other qualities, owing to this prime lack. Henry James would have fallen with them if it had not been for the extraordinary dramatic sense (never adequate to the theatre, but of that different variety which makes a novel enthralling) which gave his work suspense and excitement. I think Mr. Walpole in this matter is possibly a pupil of Henry James. Certainly he gets nearer than any other writer of his generation to the controlled suspense of James, and it is this hidden excitingness which makes "The Old Ladies" look as if it might be one of the outstanding successes of the current season.

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At the Congregational Union (a conference of Non-Conformist ministers of religion) last month our old friend "the stream of trashy novels constantly poured forth by the press" made its reappearance. It is a hardy bi or triennial. I quote from a report: "Mr. Shillito, dealing with the novel, pointed out that 20,000 novels had been printed since 1900. . . . The twenty thousand novels in a score of years (he said) do us one ill turn. This cloud of recent witnesses hides the great masters of the past, and the great masters were moralists. The disquieting element in recent fiction is the immersion of a powerful company of writers in experiences pertaining to the relations of the sexes. The world that stands revealed is one

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in which adultery is universal, marriage a rather despicable delusion, and virginity is despised, consciously or unconsciously." And so on. How rhetorical! I wish somebody would lead me to these books. I wish somebody would show me a novel by one of the great masters of the past which does not in some degree deal with experiences pertaining to the relations of the sexes. What novels, old and modern, has Mr. Shillito ever read? He mentions Conrad and Hardy, Dostoyevsky and Anatole France. Has he read the works of these writers? He might find matter to shock him in the books of three of them. He might find matter in the Bible about the relations of the sexes. He would find matter to shock him in the works of Sterne, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, Defoe — all great masters of the past, and all guilty of concern with experiences pertaining to the relations of the sexes. Yet he takes it for granted that his hearers at any rate have never read these writers, and that they will accept what he says about the great masters, and shiver at what he hints regarding modern writers. I do not know these modern libertines. I can read books ancient and modern without finding it anywhere laid down that adultery is universal, marriage a rather despicable delusion, and virginity contemptible; but it is true that I am not looking for filth, and that I am not planning to address a meeting of the unco' guid upon the depravity of the modern novel. I have no doubt at all that Mr. Shillito has one novelist in his mind, and one only, and that the novelist is Mr. Wells; but how Mr. Shillito can stand up and (by inference) accuse Mr. Wells of "concentrating into a sort of spearhead thrusting against the central Christian virtue of chastity", and how he can extend his dislike of Mr. Wells's novels — which, by the way, have never recommended unchastity, but have shown in a few of their number some of the torments of unchaste persons — to the "powerful company of writers" whom he accuses so wildly, I cannot understand. Of whom is this "powerful company" composed? I cannot think of even half a dozen third rate pornographic novelists active at this time. These people are certainly not a "company", and their "power", whether artistic or moral, is negligible. I think a kind of recklessness besets all who stand and deliver oracles from pulpits and platforms, and this recklessness is always at its zenith whenever the modern novel is the topic of abuse. The clergy are too busy to read novels, just as the novelists are too busy to listen to the clergy; but that is no reason for the wholesale denunciation in which clerics so frequently and with so little dignity engage.

SIMON PURE

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# THE AGE OF LAWLESSNESS

## By Paul Dwight Moody

IN the October number of one of our greatest monthly magazines an article appeared with the subtitle "Are American College Teachers Corrupters of Youth?" The writer, Irwin Edman, himself a college professor, goes into the question with more than ordinary insight, restraint, and fidelity; and much if not all of what he says is so true that we who are engaged in college work would do well to take his findings pretty seriously to heart.

Mr. Edman's contention is that college often opens vistas of beauty and imparts powers of discrimination which make life all the harder for those who are going to live in Gopher Prairie and Zenith City. And just because so many do live in these two recently discovered and much advertised towns, the youth who has received this gift from his college course finds himself increasingly unadapted to his environment. It is not a new question which Mr. Edman raises. For generations the youth who has gone to college from a home of narrow horizons has too often come back dissatisfied with the artistic or æsthetic ideals, or the lack of them, in his home.

But Mr. Edman might have gone a step further — we hope that he will yet — and taken up that even more serious question of the student who finds life made more difficult, not by reason of changing æsthetic ideals but by an entirely changed outlook.

When the Children of Israel were about to enter the Promised Land, according to the writers of the Pentateuch, they received strict injunctions against removing the ancient landmarks which their fathers had set up. The anachronism of the fathers' having set up landmarks in a land which they were about to enter did not seriously trouble the literary sense of these Jewish writers. It is, however, an injunction which it might be well to impress upon all teachers of youth. The Germans have a proverb about throwing out the baby with the bath, and the question confronts us: In our attempt to get students to think independently have we not in some cases encouraged them to think too independently; in other words, to free themselves from the facts of life and the long experience of the human race? Granted for the sake of argument that there is no institution existing today which is not encumbered or cluttered up with relics of past obsolete customs, shall the institution itself be declared obsolete? It is quite possible that some of the chief offenders in the cause of freedom are found in the departments of sociology and economics, but their influence is not confined to these departments. It is well to enter these laboratories with an open mind but it is fatal to have the mind open at both ends. The discussions which have taken place in many classrooms in regard, for example, to property rights or marriage, have been pretty strong meat for the youths who have listened to them. All the facts presented are true, but in the interest of honest scholarship everything which can be said relating to the origin of



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these institutions should be said — everything, not half truths or mere theories. No student can pursue painstakingly work in philosophy, psychology, biology, or any other science without revising some conceptions and possibly ideals which even in their greenest stage are safeguards. But after all, that is what he comes to college for.

Now, while the study of comparative religion or Biblical criticism or anthropology or history or sociology may shatter many pleasant delusions, it too often remains for the study of literature to impair most seriously the great viewpoint of life. There has arisen of late years a school of writers whose slogan of "art for art's sake" has led them into some pretty devious passages. Some years ago Professor Chauncey Tinker of Yale contributed an article to "The Yale Review" in which he pointed out that the passing from our consciousness of the sense of finalities was in danger of robbing our literature of a certain gracious spaciousness which we could ill afford to lose.

How shall you find any faith in finalities among a people who have continually raised the cry of *progress* without so much as asking themselves where they were progressing *to?* Much of our modern spirit was accurately summed up by the soldiers who cried aloud to the world, "We don't know where we're going but we're on our way." How different it all was, when the soldier was on his way *home.* It may seem trivial to say that your Victorian hero was on his way to a *home;* but in any case such was the literal fact with most of them, for they ended in marriage and "settling down". And Christian, the seventeenth-century hero, was on his way Home too, in an even fuller sense. Therefore the faith of both centuries flowered into splendid fictions. But as the modern world has disposed of its confidence in things at the end of its path, the production of splendid fictions has become progressively difficult.

It is regarded as somewhat banal nowadays to sing about heaven as being one's home, and I am told that the best novelists do not indulge in the practice; but the plain fact remains that so long as you believe in a Celestial City not beyond the attainment of man, so long you may have the possibility of a "Pilgrim's Progress"; but when you have laid aside your faith in the City, then there will be no "progress" and no pilgrims, and no work of art that seeks to set forth their adventures. So long as you have confidence in the way men have done things in the past, you may go bravely forward and dig for buried treasure, but when the new theories have deprived money of all its value, then you will be wise to stop digging. You will not even dream of digging. And then such a story as "Treasure Island" will be impossible, except as a sad relic of a deluded age. And when the new order has produced a perfect equality among the sexes, then you will join Mr. Wells in praising Rider Haggard for having given up the writing of romances; and then, also, such an amazing yarn as "She" will have become impossible, and you will produce for a heroine a drab nobody like Lady Harmon. It is the faith in the "treasurability" of things, if I may coin a word, that makes good stories possible; and so long as an author can retain it, so long can he write them. And so long, moreover, will he be able to use the ancient formulas of fiction, and in particular that one, in whatever shape his faith may care to phrase it, that the children of his imagination, after their painful trials and adventures ended, "lived happily ever after". [October, 1921.]

What we feel about much of the present writing is that there are no stars in the sky of these men. It may be pointed out that this sense of the worthlessness of life and its insignificance, with the consequent insignificance of conduct, is nothing new. You get it in "Ecclesiastes" and the "Rubaiyat". In the Russians, despite that terrific realism which spares nothing, you feel behind all a sense of immensity which is akin to the sense of the infinite. Do you get it in such books as "Main Street" and "Babbitt"? "Where there is no vision, the people perish" — and literature also.

Literary atheism has not and will not, we are convinced, produce a great or lasting book. Sneer at the Victorians as much as the present generation will, that same present generation may produce, and it seems to me that it is pro-

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ducing, a moral and æsthetic desert. Cleverness is a poor substitute for spiritual insight, and brilliance of pen for soundness of heart.

Mr. Bryan and the Fundamentalists decry the teaching of evolution. It has been wittily said that their real objection to evolution is that it has done so little for them. But, again, the great danger to the youth of our land is not in the presentation of scientific theories or facts, but rather in the creation, dissemination, and teaching of a literature which is without ideals or moral sanction. "There are other ways of thinking of your beloved", said George Meredith, "than as a future mother of children." The welter of sex which we have been enduring of late is, in its last analysis, more than anything else due to the fact that there has arisen in the minds of men a twentieth century reecho of the old question of the Garden, "Yea, hath God said?" Believe that the Ten Commandments, whether or not written upon tables of stone by an anthropomorphic finger of God, have a moral sanction, and there will be a certain idealism left in life, whether it expresses itself in a novel like "The Interpreter's House" or in the cruder but so readable romances of Sabatini. But feel that these laws are but the worn out *mores* of a primitive people and George Moore is apt to become a prophet for you. The story of the landlubber who, told to point the prow of the boat toward the North Star, reported after a time that he had sailed past and asked for another, is a parable of some of these "emancipated" people.

The difference between art and photography is that in one there is selection, in other words, discrimination. The present school of writing seems to be concerned more with the craft of photography than with the higher branch of art. Its practitioners do not question whether or not a thing is worth doing. All they ask is that it be done with a fidelity worthy of a nobler cause. If literature is taught either from the standpoint of appreciation or from the standpoint of creative writing with teachers who embrace this philosophy, it cannot fail to have its effect upon the students. The question they will ask in regard to everything is not, Is it truth — in its larger sense? but the much poorer question, Is it veracity? With a person who cannot distinguish between veracity and truth, there can be no discussion. It is the old cynical question of Pilate.

Theoretically, a school of writers which has no stars in its firmament, no sense of boundlessness in the universe, no consciousness in its soul of the infinite, should produce a class of readers sophisticated, blasé, and Athenian. Looking back from effect to cause, is this not precisely what we find? I am not concerned now with the cheap stuff which deluges the counter of every newsstand in subway and railway stations, of the "snappy" story type. We plead a certain ignorance of this, or innocence, if you will, based not so much on moral aversion as the ennui which it has produced every time we have tried to read it. It is insufferably dull — a dulness which it shares with so much of the modern drama of which the first stage property is a bedroom set. Just what can be expected from this type of literature? Precisely what we are experiencing. We are told that "The Plastic Age" is a faithful picture of some colleges. I should like to believe that it is not, but both the sale of the book and the assertion of my more widely traveled and experienced friends convince me that I am wrong. The moral conditions represented by such a book as "Town and Gown" are what

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may be looked for if we have done with ideals as outworn and "Victorian".

Recently we entertained a group of investigators to whom, if I recollect clearly, we were the twenty first college. The stories they brought about some colleges were perfectly amazing. This bobbed haired and unchaperoned generation might not worry us if cigarette smoking were its worst vice — granted that this is a vice. But when the standards and morals of Greenwich Village enter our colleges and universities, they can be objected to on the double ground that they do not make for intelligence and scholarship on the one hand, or worth of character on the other. There are certain disciplines which are bound to be felt in more than the field to which they primarily apply. It is a commonplace among educators that the great value of athletics is that in any environment where they have the proper value they contribute materially to scholarship, and that to make and maintain a place on a good football team requires a discipline which is probably the equal of any three hour course and is pretty apt to make itself felt in an elevated scholarship in the more strictly academic work of the college.

We have recently, as a people, been shocked by a remarkable example of depravity and perversion on the part of two intellectual students in Chicago. But what can we expect when heart and soul are not educated to keep pace with the intellect? To quicken, train, and stimulate the mind without widening the moral horizon or raising the viewpoint, is only to put instruments of incalculable danger in the hands of a child. Fortunately for humanity, the intelligence of the cave man was on a low plane, as low as his moral standard. When, into the hands of a man with the morals of a cave man and a sense of social responsibility adhering to the Neanderthal man, we place such weapons as a sixteen inch gun, poison gas, and violet rays, what can we look for? It seems to the present writer that we can look for precisely what we are getting. It is a truism that the soul of education is the education of the soul. Although a large number of my colleagues would violently dissent from my position, I dare to affirm that that education which does not make a man a better man in the moral sense of the word is a failure, no matter how much more efficient he may become in money making on the one hand, or æsthetically appreciative on the other.

It is possible to discuss with utter frankness in the classroom of sociology modern marriage as an institution, without grave injury to youthful minds. It is even possible to explore the biological basis of life to the last degree without incurring shipwreck. But I doubt if with safety the essays or novels of one who disregards the laws by which humanity has journeyed up can profitably be made the basis for study, or the viewpoint of such a one commended to students as liberal and enlightened, without fairly imminent and serious consequences. It is never knowledge itself which is dangerous, it is the moral attitude toward knowledge.

James Lane Allen in his exquisite story of a generation ago, "The Choir Invisible", represented his hero as having rather gross mindedly read Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" and found himself caught by the frank and to us indelicate passages of that book rather than by the poetry and beauty. Herein is a parable for the present generation. You will find students who have never read "Intimations of Immortality" but who know that Wordsworth had an illegitimate child.

I have before me as I write some re-

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flections on the present teaching of literature from one of the most successful teachers I have met. He sums up his feelings in these words: "I am sure that the subtle poison injected into the minds of students in the so called literature classes does its share in undermining the whole moral system, and it is a larger share than is commonly supposed."

I am aware that there are those who will spring up and say that the student must face the facts. "Facing the facts" is a valuable thing provided all the facts are faced, not a selected group; and it is a fact that amid sordid conditions, for every Sister Carrie that Mr. Dreiser depicts, thousands of overworked and underpaid shopgirls keep faith with themselves. I humbly submit that one fact is at least as valuable as the other, and may be just as worthy of literary enshrinement.

Whether or not the lawlessness in our colleges, the dislike for restraint, the restlessness under tradition, the tendency to use "Victorian" and "Puritan" as the strongest adjectives of disapproval, can be laid to the (shall we use the word?) amoral teaching of English, there is one thing we should remember. Most of our colleges, in the east at any rate, were founded by men and women with fixed principles and firm convictions regarding right and wrong. The liberals in conduct of those days did comparatively little for the youth of their generation in the way of foundations. There would seem to be, to some of us at any rate, a reason here for pretty careful consideration before the landmarks they set up are juggled too much. We may have journeyed a long way from many of their beliefs, and the field of science has widened quite beyond their imagination. But their purpose was as honest as any discussion can be in the present day. We owe them much, as we owe the younger generation. We believe the discharge of the debt toward both will be found in the same policy, a preservation of the best. The words of Horace Greeley at the laying of a cornerstone at Buchtel in 1871 sum it all up:

> This, then, I apprehend, is the proper work of the college: to appreciate and measure, and undistrustfully accept and commend, the gigantic strides which physical science is making in our day, yet not be swept away by them; to welcome all that is true and beneficent in the impetuous currents of modern thought, but not to exaggerate their breadth and depth, not to accept their direction as authoritative or final; to proffer a genial and gracious hospitality to whatever is nobly new, yet hold fast, and from time to time assert, that no discovery in science, no advances in human knowledge, can ever invalidate or belittle the Golden Rule, and no conclusion of philosophy ever equal in importance that simple affirmation of the untaught Judean peasant, who long ago perceived and proclaimed that God is Love.

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# THE STUFF OF W. B. MAXWELL

## By Grant Overton

*With a Portrait by Bertrand Zadig*

A STOUT arm in a good man's cause! W. B. Maxwell is such stuff as novelists are made of. Please notice that I do not say "born". Whoever may be the born novelists, this man is not among them. He was thirty five before he published a book, and neither his first nor his second book was of consequence. He is now the author of twenty books, of which a half dozen, taken collectively, are of extremely high merit — and a totally overlooked importance. It is a fair challenge to find in the work of any other living novelist, English or American, a half dozen which, as a whole, are of such excellence. To this statement I will make one exception, Thomas Hardy. But I will immediately add that in the actual stuff of his best novels — not the setting but the substance, not the action but the idea, thought, theme, and attitude — W. B. Maxwell is more curiously like Thomas Hardy than any other contemporary. And I hope to show why.

Yet — to be frank — this writer is without recognition. I do not mean that his work has not been noticed and praised. I do not mean that his books have not been read; his best have sold well. But somehow his name never occurs to anyone in conversations; his work never figures in the general reviews and perspectives of those who deal with current books; his books are always insufficiently noticed and often inadequately dealt with; and he is allowed to visit the United States — he did not come to lecture — and escape with the minimum of attention and that almost wholly from a few professional people. I grant that this was partly his own doing. But Joseph Conrad was a retiring person. Nevertheless, we knew he was here.

What is wrong? Allow me to distribute the blame with impartial enthusiasm. The whole thing is, of course, a failure in publicity; but a failure in publicity is never twice due to the same causes. In Maxwell's case, the fault is everybody's but his; for so far as he is concerned, the man and his books provide the material for a high reputation, as reputations go among living writers. To deal first with some technical causes: he has been so unfortunate as to have at one time or another four American publishers. The interest and activity of one naturally abated when his new work went to another; the new publisher (with perhaps one exception) had little interest in promoting Maxwell's previous work. Second, like all or nearly all writers of genuine distinction, Maxwell's books have varied in their *type* of story. It may no doubt be said that they have varied in excellence; but from the promotion standpoint this is much less of a handicap. The unchanging habit of the human mind is to expect the same *kind* of story from an author, and a difference in kind causes almost as much perturbation to publisher, book-



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seller, and finally to the average reader, as would the sudden appearance of a Buick from Mr. Ford's plant.

But this is not all. The critics of the country have pretty generally failed with Maxwell. They have perhaps perceived one of his books now and then with a perception clear and just in its award; I cannot think of one of them who has ever shown an awareness of the man's whole work. The reviewers have frequently failed, though with more excuse; for their business is chiefly with one book at the time of its first appearance, or with the man himself, if a legend exists or is forming. And again, we all have been at fault; for the business of every reader who comes upon a book of power and distinction is to know more of that author's work by at least one book. The literary affair is not unlike those tests used in medicine, a book taking the place of a culture in the test tube. A positive test followed by a negative test requires at least one more to prove something.

William Babington Maxwell is a son of John Maxwell and Mary Elizabeth Maxwell, who was "M. E. Braddon" or "Miss Braddon", a popular novelist. He married Sydney Moore, youngest daughter of Charles William Moore, of the Bengal Civil Service, and there are a son and a daughter. Although nearly fifty when the European war began — he was born in 1866 — W. B. Maxwell served throughout the war as subaltern and then as captain in the Royal Fusiliers.

The circumstances of his life have been unusual and significant without being spectacular. His father was the publisher whose business developed into that of the London publishing house of Hurst and Blackett. His mother wrote a type of story that can hardly be said to exist today, at least in America. It was somewhat sensational and the plot was used more or less for its own sake; the rest was feminine without being competent and Victorian without being richly creative. In short, the work of M. E. Braddon was what we should certainly call pretty cheap fiction; but there is reason to believe that Mrs. Maxwell knew this and also knew that it was the extent of her talent.

But the young Maxwell did not turn to literature. He wanted to paint. So he went to art school.

It is evident that what followed determined the man's whole career, not by any success but by its disappointments; to me it seems clear that the event also settled, probably unconsciously, the character of his work. A natural reticence has perhaps withheld so much that we who read his novels would like to know. But I may quote some sentences from an article by James Walter Smith which I suspect to have appeared in the Boston "Evening Transcript":

> He did not become a writer until other prospects failed. Had they not failed, doubtless he would not have been a writer. A few years of study in the art schools convinced him that painting was not his forte. Whereupon (so the record runs) he relinquished the brush and, in a semi-spirit of disappointed ambition, retired to country life. Curiously, the marks of that period remain in Maxwell's face and bearing, and in many respects today he reminds one more of a country squire than of a literary man. For a very considerable time, it appears, he was without definite occupation — "at a loose end", as the English say. Writes one of his biographers: "Hunting a good deal with the New Forest hounds, when living at his mother's beautiful country house, Annesley Bank, near Lyndhurst; travelling on the Continent; and, as he puts it, 'comfortably idling and perhaps learning my future trade or profession, which you will, of novelist the while'."

I hereby exonerate Mr. Smith; he is not trying to smooth over an awkward

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*W. B. Maxwell*



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thing. On the contrary he is doing his best — and doing well, indeed — to give us the hint or picture of its full awkwardness. But he is terribly hampered by the convention of discreetness and pleasantness about a living author. This accursed formula, kept in force about equally by the personal sensitiveness of authors and the anxieties of publishers, has robbed half our living literary figures of the vitality and human interest they should possess in the popular mind. Why not say that Booth Tarkington, in his young manhood, was too proud to write — publicly? Why have lied romantically about R. L. Stevenson? And why not see the explanation of W. B. Maxwell's work by a clear view of W. B. Maxwell? "Earth has no answer, nor the seas that mourn." Fitzgerald was right.

Joseph Hergesheimer also studied art a little, finally emerging as a novelist. But between Hergesheimer, naive, jolly, and conceited, and W. B. Maxwell there is no possible comparison. Nothing could discourage the American, nothing could make him unhappy. Thomas Hardy was trained to be an architect, but by twenty five he was writing and at thirty two he had made a place for himself with "Under the Greenwood Tree". The true disappointment, the deep bitterness, for Hardy came later. Joseph Conrad became a novelist at thirty eight, as against Mr. Maxwell's thirty five; but Conrad had not been "at a loose end" for a period of years preceding. One has to know something of Mr. Maxwell to take his phrase about "comfortably idling" with a proper whole barrel of salt. A woman with child and a man with a career have little beyond the appearance of comfort and idleness.

Of course he was struck down; and I daresay that from being a young man with a disappointed ambition he became that really tragic thing, a young man in search of an ambition. There was nothing for him to do then but to go down to the country, there to spend Heaven knew how many frustrate years, there to acquire a countenance less like a country squire's than the frank surrender of one whom life has put aside. As you sit now in the presence of the gentle, shy man of nearly sixty, the expression on that face remains tragic and defeated but without the dulling of the eye which denotes the true defeat. The mouth is pitiful and compassionate and kind; it broods upon the things that the eyes have seen, those eyes with their deep glance, as often as not turned upward, as if fixed upon the things that lie in the mind behind them, projected somewhere ahead and up. It is a face without hope but with any amount of mercy; a heavy face that has the effect of increasing the appearance of shyness. But yet a face! — not a blank wall, like the visage of Mr. Hardy. And it may be tragic but it is never for one instant the tragic mask.

In these desolate years his mother was perhaps the only one who was able in the least to help him. The popular Miss Braddon, a literary swan, was not disturbed, it would appear, by this ugly duckling. Maxwell says: "Most of the knowledge I possess of how to write and, indeed, the fact that I commenced to write at all, I owe to my mother. She was never too busy, or too immersed in her work, to discuss my literary ambitions, or work of my own. She did not always know the way any story of mine was going, for I wished neither for it to be an imitation of hers nor in any way to trade upon her own great and world-wide reputation."

The fact that he was the son of M. E. Braddon should not have been any more of a difficulty than the fact that Aldous Huxley is a nephew of Mrs.

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Humphry Ward. The difficulty arose within him; it did not come from outside. But it is neither hard to understand it, nor to extenuate and excuse. Whatever the degree of frankness or reticence in speech between them, Mrs. Maxwell must have known that here was a talent of a power and dignity she did not possess; a mind she could not advise; only a son she could love and try to help. The young man could not but be conscious that an intellectual gulf severed him from his parent; that as regards both the quality and extent of feeling or emotion they faced different ways. It needs all of love and respect to compass and hold together such a situation; and I am certain that the fact that love and respect were abundantly forthcoming did not lessen the heavy strain, conscious or not.

Another detail: M. E. Braddon was immensely successful. And in the path that her son must take, to quote Mr. Conrad, "art is long and life is short, and success is very far off", even though it be the form of success of which Mr. Conrad was speaking, a form not translated with any assurance into money. It could not make matters any easier for W. B. Maxwell to know that his variety of success might remain unintelligible.

In 1901, when he was thirty five, Maxwell's first book was published. Its full title was "The Countess of Maybury: Being the Intimate Conversations of the Right Honourable the Countess of Maybury. Collected with Sedulous Care and Respectful Admiration by W. B. Maxwell." A. St. John Adcock, in "Gods of Modern Grub Street", describes it as "a series of satirical, light comedy dialogues of high society which preceded the 'Dolly Dialogues' by a year or two but did not, as they did, set a fashion." Pure experimentation, of course. Two years later came a second book, a collection of short stories called "Fabulous Fancies", which is said to have in some degree "that quality of realism predominant in all the novels and stories he has written since".

Now there is and has been in London for years a publisher named Grant Richards, a man of courage, some remarkable foresights, and no little originality. Maxwell credits Grant Richards with getting him to write, "really write", and there is no reason to doubt the award. "Had I not chanced to meet Richards I should probably never seriously have attempted to become a novelist." Richards, perhaps in less formulaic language, incited Maxwell to write "an arresting and soul-stirring novel of modern life". He did more, he risked the book. Without a past performance by Maxwell to justify him, Richards commissioned Maxwell to write.

It was one of the most successful of the publisher's ventures, for Maxwell came through with "The Ragged Messenger", published in 1904. James Walter Smith says:

> It does not seem twenty years since "The Ragged Messenger" so deeply impressed London with its sincerity and poignancy. It was a good title and an absorbing story. One does not easily forget the "mad Messiah" and his large-souled effort to do good in the world through mission work in the London slums. Inherently the book attempts to contrast poverty and wealth as it exists under modern conditions, while superficially it is just an appealing story of a man's struggles between principle and desire. It illustrates excellently Maxwell's qualities, particularly that of vitality. It is no marvel that a writer should have found fame who could tell, as Maxwell told, the story of the Reverend Mr. Morton's meeting with a young woman at the mission. She had plucked him by the sleeve on the pavement and he had led her within to find a seat. He preached that night as if inspired. Then afterward, when telling of it, he said: "There was light now on the dull, white faces, but it was not to them I

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was preaching. Out from the crowd at the back she came creeping, her eyes fixed on mine, till she paused midway at the end of a bench. . . . It was not her beauty that inspired me, but the soul shining from her eyes. The light of the gas lamps played about her hair until it seemed a halo of gold. And I told them of the golden treasure laid by for them all — I was full of confidence — speaking truly as ambassador from the highest of all Powers. I promised them the good things they were cheated of down here. . . . Well, the service was over, and I sat down to rest. Lady Sarah, this poor girl was standing on the border line of death and infamy when she plucked my sleeve. She had heard of my message and had come to me in her bitter need. Would I help her? Think of it! Young, beautiful, penniless and friendless. Would I save her now and hereafter?"

"The Ragged Messenger" was followed by "Vivien", and then came the novel which has always been the author's own favorite, "The Guarded Flame". I shall have to offer mere notes on some of the succeeding books in order to discuss one or two at some length.

In England, it seems to be usual to put on the top shelf "The Guarded Flame", "Mrs. Thompson", and "In Cotton Wool", and to rank "The Devil's Garden" and "The Mirror and the Lamp" just below. I think that a consensus in America—if one were possible among the undiscoverable few who may have read a dozen of Maxwell's books—would single out these novels as his best work: "Mrs. Thompson", "In Cotton Wool", "The Devil's Garden", "Spinster of This Parish", and "The Day's Journey". To these five I expect will be added Maxwell's new novel, "Elaine at the Gates". But here is the point: I think that a majority, or even a plurality, to determine the order among these five or six, would not be achievable. Each is too good for any satisfactory agreement to be reached. The order I have chosen is simply the order of their publication.

"Mrs. Thompson" is a brilliant, satirical story of a middle class and self reliant person. "In Cotton Wool" depicts with power (always under control) the degeneracy of a young man who has all his life been kept wrapped "in cotton wool". "The Day's Journey" is the story of two men whose boyhood friendship has somehow persisted all their lives, surviving even the powerful pressures apart entailed by their marriages, until, in old age, though always apparently quarreling, they have in truth become indispensable to each other. This novel has more humor and no less truth and tenderness than the books that are more grim. "The Devil's Garden" is very possibly the finest thing Maxwell has written, and it is his most widely known work on both sides of the ocean, for quite different reasons. In England a self constituted censor, the advisory committee of the circulating libraries, stupidly banned the book, with the result of a greatly enhanced sale. In America the film version of the story featuring Lionel Barrymore was shown all over the country and at the same time a cheap edition, illustrated from the photoplay, was brought out.

The title comes from a quaint old saying, and "the devil's garden" is, of course, the human mind. I cannot better the description of the novel given by Helen Thomas Follett and Wilson Follett in "Some Modern Novelists":

William Dale, a rural postmaster, incurs censure for an official indiscretion; then he discovers that his wife, to get the influence necessary to his reinstatement, has sold herself to a lecherous old man. The scene of this discovery, after which Dale goes away in rage and humiliation, is the first crisis. Unaccountably he returns and takes up the broken relation; the Dales go into the country, buy a farm, and live a placid life full of kindnesses to those less well off than themselves. They adopt a homeless young girl. Dale's paternal love for her, his occasional fits of moroseness

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and despondency, and his somewhat neurasthenic religious experiences form together the dead level of the story.

As Dale grows older, and his young protegée grows into the first beauty of womanhood, he comes sharply face to face with the hideous fact that all his senses covet possession of her, that he is all but on the point of reenacting the part once played by another toward his own wife.

He struggles, he is horribly torn; and at the supreme point of his moral agony it is divulged to the reader, through Dale's own self torturing memories, that long ago, at the time of his disappearance, he had killed the man to whom his wife had sold herself.

In this second ironic crisis of the book, then, Dale confronts the fact that he is about to commit the same wrong for which he has murdered a man. The revelation is so placed as to re-interpret his whole life and character. It is more than a trick of suspense; it is an example of technical adroitness as nearly sufficient in itself as it could well be, yet rigidly subordinated to a purpose which is other than technical.

Suppose we glance now at "Spinster of This Parish". Here, as in "The Day's Journey", the first chapter is a particular scene selected from the many consecutive scenes of the novel because the record of all that went before and of what came after, presently to be unrolled, will illuminate that moment completely. The whole tale of "The Day's Journey" is focused by the glimpse of two quarrelsome and abusive elderly men who are yet somehow inseparable. The irony and pathos of Emily Verinder's life is concentrated in one little episode by which she is introduced to us. A young girl comes to this spinster to pour out the story of her love on the brink of marriage. "But, of course, Miss Verinder," the girl recollects, speaking with a condescension natural to her years and her great happiness, "you do not know what passion means." Even Miss Verinder's unexpected and mildly challenging answer goes unheeded; the child, having brimmed over with her delight and her delicious doubts, goes away. This is all of that moment, but it takes on various colors as we go back and trace Miss Verinder's story. For she has defied her parents and cut herself off from everything that would make such a life as hers worthwhile simply for the sake of a man whom she could see only occasionally, whose arms about her, as he said goodby, might be embracing her for the last time. The distinguished explorer who, with brief, infrequent intervals, spends so many years risking his life in remote and dangerous places, Miss Verinder's lover, has a mad wife who can be confined and cared for but from whom he cannot legally be set free. And these two people, Miss Verinder and he, are pathetically middle aged people before the impending marriage can be announced of the intrepid explorer and Emily Verinder, "spinster of this parish".

Mr. Maxwell's most recent novel, "Elaine at the Gates" (1924), is less succinctly described and I wish only to characterize it. It opens with a glimpse of a little girl waiting wistfully outside the large iron gates while her father pays a call. The scene symbolizes much of her life and experience as a woman. Mr. Maxwell presents her as she is, not as an attractive heroine. Orphaned and sent to live with an aunt, she grows up to be a stolid young woman of deep, true, and normal instincts buried too far down. She is deficient in expressiveness and never very happy. From the first life deals harshly with her. Her aunt's death, through an oversight, leaves her penniless. Her lover is taken from her by a worthless woman in circumstances that are left maddeningly unexplained to her. She becomes the morose governess in a wretched family, tending a disagreeable lame boy. From this she is rescued—if that is the word—by a clergyman who must certainly stand as

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one of the magnificent character portraits of contemporary literature. The Reverend Mark Awdrey, an untidy person whose power over women Elaine finds inexplicable, is really something more than a domineering fanatic. He is that actual but amazing type which gains its way by sheer determination and wind. He is sincere. His relations with the women who obey him are unexceptionable. He genuinely believes in the power of the spirit and he makes that power felt, with men as well as with women, by the simple force of his extraordinary personality, by a tireless reiteration and assertion of confident purpose, and by talking people numb.

He talks Elaine into marrying him, a marriage deliberately platonic on both sides, for Elaine has given her heart elsewhere and Awdrey's sole creed is the power of the spirit over the flesh. They work together in London slums and get along relatively well until Awdrey discovers that Elaine has lost her faith. He sets to work at once, with all his chest expansion, to restore it to her. But Elaine, who has seen the wreck of her lover's life, is past the power of lungs, even Awdrey's, or assertive will power, even her husband's, to "save". Then a horrible thing happens. Defeated for the first time in his life of spiritual conquests, Mark Awdrey finds himself hopelessly in love with Elaine, really desiring her. In successfully opposing him, she has destroyed something in him.

I said I would not describe the novel, and you must not for one moment think the outline I have given a description. "Elaine at the Gates" is not to be squeezed into any mere synopsis. It proceeds without short cuts or sentimental compromise to what most readers will regard as a happy ending. Unlike "The Devil's Garden" and "Spinster of This Parish", it does not present a whole life or most of a life. But it has a slow intensity, an awful verisimilitude, that belongs to neither of the earlier stories. It is relentless. It is by an Englishman, not a Russian; it exists in fact and not in some person's tortured mind; but equally you cannot escape it.

I am afraid you may begin to feel that, on the subject of Mr. Maxwell, you cannot escape me. But I have not really much more to say on the subject of his work, which, after all, is there for anyone to discover and thrill over in the discovery. Why does his work curiously resemble Thomas Hardy's? Obviously, because it is largely in the tragic mood. His first real novel, "The Ragged Messenger", was a tragic story, though nevertheless a great popular success. But the differences between Maxwell and Hardy are quite as striking. Hardy was educated as an architect, yet never in his life has he learned the art of a novel's construction. His best work is often structurally clumsy; its defects of this sort sometimes reach the level of the absurd. Maxwell failed as a painter but no living novelist is more expert in selection and composition, in placing high lights, in achieving a climax which is natural without being obvious, and which is free from the sense of artificiality or prearrangement. So strong is his dramatic sense that it seems incredible that he should not also have written plays, especially when we consider that the few contemporaries who are his equal in technical construction, W. Somerset Maugham for an instance, are practically all playwrights as well as novelists.

Hardy's philosophy is one of bitter denial, of hopeless negation, but Maxwell, who tries to prove nothing, is

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plainly a believer in the divine justice. In place of Hardy's bitterness there is perhaps a terrible sadness, as when William Dale saw himself tempted by the thing for which he had killed another. But with the sadness there is compassion, an evident faith in the power of self ransom, of escape . . . or perhaps only of a merciful release; but at least of that.

Maxwell, as anyone can see from "The Devil's Garden", holds that there must come an hour of self judgment; Hardy believes that self judgment is not imposed on us who are the mere helpless puppets of a dumb and senseless Immanent Force.

Hardy is often idyllic, but his men and women are sometimes abstractions. They are made and moved to fit a point of view. Maxwell is hardly ever idyllic but he never created an abstract character in his life; his people are flesh and blood, however strange, and they move not at his bidding but from their own faculty of free will.

Hardy sets the stage, or selects a stage set for him. Maxwell is evidently incapable of this; he goes with his people where they take him; it is never the background that is significant but the beating heart, the harried mind, in man or woman.

And finally, Maxwell has the supreme gift, as you may grasp by his handling of Mark Awdrey. He can present a character, totally unexplained, and show you the full explanation of him by his behavior in the scenes of the story. The reader, no more than Elaine, can comprehend Awdrey when he enters the scene. But even as he unfolded himself to her, so he unfolds himself to the reader, until you know him to the core. This is the apex of creative writing in fiction: to take an inexplicable person and, without going back, without attempting to explicate him, make him bare his very soul. In the case of Awdrey there is not even resort to any technical device of ellipsis or suspense; he simply is unwound until you see him naked.

Maxwell came to America in 1923, to represent the British Society of Authors at the Motion Picture Congress. The few who met him found him singularly lovable. He lives in London and belongs to the Carlton, Garrick, and Beefsteak Clubs; but he is not a frequenter of the literary circles. When he got back after the American visit he wrote altogether too flatteringly of the United States, but there is no doubt that he meant it and that he admired us, though certainly away beyond our deserts.

But if he ever comes over here again — !

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# THE NEW YORKER

*The New Opera Season—Pavlowa and Karsavina—Two O'Neill Productions—The French Invasion—Dixie on Broadway—Ethel Barrymore and "Mrs. Tanqueray".*

EACH autumn at the beginning of the season it is the habit of the confirmed New Yorker to remark, "It is a bad season. Nothing but poor plays! No good music! etc., etc." And each autumn, as the winter approaches, this refrain is transformed with monotonous regularity into, "Well it's a fine season. There has never been so much to see and hear!" There are perhaps two leading reasons for this; first, the surfeit of first rate attractions which has come our way since the war and, second, the fact that the season is not really under way until the middle of November.

This year has been no exception. After much backing and filling (which included carloads of bad pictures, bad music, and bad plays) things have settled down into the rhythm of a fine strong and steady beat. True, the opening week of the opera was, save for a larger display of diamonds than usual, a little worse than average opening weeks. "Aida", refurbished, opened the season in a blare of trumpets appropriate to such a war horse. Maria Jeritza was back and Beniamino Gigli and Margarete Matzenauer and the versatile Florence Easton. It is pretty much the same . . . the best singers in the world but not the most interesting repertoire. When one asks, "Why can't we have more novelties, more French opera?" the answer is always the same, namely, "The Metropolitan is the only opera house in the world which breaks even and sometimes makes a little money. If we gave French opera we would lose money because there is no audience for it. The subscription seats, which occupy the expensive portions of the house, just balance expenses. Therefore in order to have a margin we must fill up the top galleries and the standing room. That is where the profit comes from."

And so, to fill these seats, "Rigoletto" and "Aida" and "Lucia di Lammermoor" jingle through performance after performance, and the program of the greatest opera house in the world is arranged for an audience composed largely of bootblacks and fruit vendors, amiable and often charming people, but not especially interested in the progress of music.

During the same week, however, there appeared simultaneously the two greatest dancers of these times, one whose name is a household word from New York to San Francisco, the other a dancer who appears in this country for the first time. The notoriously economical Pavlowa presented one novelty of important dimensions, a new ballet based upon the legend of Don Quixote and equipped with an exceedingly mediocre score. Her present tour she has announced as her last, and so Tamara Karsavina appears upon the horizon at the proper time to take up the crown of the woman who is advertised round the world with arrogance and justification as "the incomparable". Pavlowa and Karsa-



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vina received their training in the same school, but Pavlowa left Petrograd or Leningrad, or whatever St. Petersburg is now called, before the ascendancy of Diaghileff and his troupe, the creators of such wild Slavic ballets as "Tamar", "L'Oiseau de Feu", and the other pieces which revolutionized the history of dancing. This circumstance is evident in the dancing of the two women. Technically Pavlowa is the superior beyond question of her younger rival, but on the side of verve, spirit, and pantomimic ability Tamara Karsavina comes off an easy winner. One should not be seen without the other, for together they represent a growth in the art of dancing which has occurred during our time, the first real growth since the days of Taglioni. Karsavina is, by the way, a marvelously beautiful woman.

Meanwhile, in quite another part of town, in the remote reaches of Greenwich Village, the Provincetown Players have earned a vast debt of gratitude from all playgoers by presenting two pieces by Eugene O'Neill, one an old piece called "S. S. Glencairn", the other a play with the odd name of "Desire Under the Elms". The first piece is an arrangement in four disconnected acts which presents life as it is lived by the brutal crew of a British tramp steamer. Previously the individual acts had been presented separately as one act plays under the titles "The Moon of the Caribbees", "The Long Voyage Home", "In the Zone", and "Bound East for Cardiff". To be properly understood they should be seen on one bill under conditions which bring out their interrelation and full color. They represent O'Neill at a period when his fame was beginning and so they contain some crudities which cannot be overlooked; yet these are lost in flashes of genius which rise and dazzle the audience in sheets of flame. Surely there has never been in the American theatre a moment more thrilling, indeed more utterly devastating, than the finish of the third play, "In the Zone". The Provincetown group has staged the plays in splendid fashion, and fine performances are given by Walter Abel, E. J. Ballentine, and Helen Freeman.

A few blocks away at the Greenwich Village Theatre, "Desire Under the Elms" presents the latest development of O'Neill. It is a simple but terrible story, the tale of life lived on a stony New England farm in the house of a Puritanical and brutal man, who brings home at the age of seventy a new bride forty years his junior, only to have her fall in love with his son and bear a child who belongs to young Eben. Nor is this the only desire dealt with in the title; there is the fierce desire to escape from the terrible farm, the passionate desires of possession, and the mystical desires of a grim Calvinistic faith. There is in this play all the fine elevation of a Greek tragedy and ten times the sense of reality. Indeed, it is so real and tragical that one leaves the theatre in a state bordering upon exhaustion. It is admirably staged, and no small amount of its superb artistic success is due to a really wonderful performance by Mary Morris (who only last week was the sweet Gertrude of "Fashion") in the rôle of the new stepmother. Walter Huston as the father and Charles Ellis as the son are very close to magnificence in the complete sense of the word. The play itself is the best analysis of the witch burning brand of Puritanism that has yet been done in America . . . better even than "The Scarlet Letter". And it is, in quality, like that cruel story of Katherine Mansfield's,

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THE DRAMA SHELF

*"A Rabbit and a Leg" by Richard Hughes (Knopf). Five little plays by a young poet-dramatist.*

*"Mary Rose" by J. M. Barrie (Scribner). This delicate and beautiful fantasy at last published.*

*"The Chief British Dramatists" edited by Brander Matthews and Paul Robert Lieder (Houghton Mifflin). A great dramatic panorama — well presented and ably edited.*

*"Garden Varieties" by Kenyon Nicholson (Appleton). Entertaining, workable one act plays for practical little theatre use.*

*"Plays for Pagans" by Colin Campbell Clements (Appleton). Slight dramas investing ordinary beings with a touch of fantasy.*

*"The Best Plays of 1923–1924" edited by Burns Mantle (Small, Maynard). His usual interesting tabloids and statistics.*

*"Conversations on Contemporary Drama" by Clayton Hamilton (Macmillan). Informed and stimulating discussion by a capable critic.*

*"Drama and Mankind" by Halcott Glover (Small, Maynard). Indefinite speculations on some things dramatic.*

*"The Life Story of an Ugly Duckling" by Marie Dressler (McBride). Amusing, readable memories of the lighter side of stage life.*

*"The Talmadge Sisters" by Margaret L. Talmadge (Lippincott). The extraordinary story of an American movie family.*

*"Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas" edited by Joseph Quincy Adams (Houghton Mifflin). A scholarly and, to the student of drama, fascinating addition to the worthy series that includes Professor Neilson's "Chief Elizabethan Dramatists".*

*"On the Art of the Theatre" by Gordon Craig (Small, Maynard). New edition of this theatre classic.*

*"Carolina Folk-Plays, Second Series" edited by Frederick H. Koch (Holt). Simple, effective dramas of American life.*

*"The Face" by Frances Guignard Gibbes (Brentano). There is lovely poetry in this poetic drama — unusual and moving.*

*"Four Plays for Four Women" by Alice Gerstenberg (Brentano). Useful if not brilliant character studies for women actors.*

*"Pan or Pierrot" by Mary MacMillan (Appleton). Somewhat elaborate but perhaps effective masque.*

*"Action!" by Holland Hudson (Appleton). Burlesque for amateurs. Should prove amusing.*

*"A Morality Play for the Leisured Class" by John L. Balderston (Appleton). A mildly amusing satire.*

*"Shakespeare Smiles" by Lawton Campbell (Appleton). A one act play with a good idea.*

*"Aria da Capo" and "The Lamp and the Bell" by Edna St. Vincent Millay (Appleton). These Millay plays available separately in new form.*

"The Dolls' House", and Conrad's "Freya of the Seven Isles", a tragic commentary on the meanness and stupidity of the human race.

That New York has become incontestably the capital of the world has been amply testified in the past two or three years by the migration here of all manner of artists, Russian, German, French, and English. The latest visitor is Firmin Gémier from the Odéon of Paris and a company of mildly adequate actors. It is difficult to be harsh with M. Gémier and his company, because they are visiting us upon the invitation of our govern-

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ment; yet it is necessary to take stock of him and his theatre along with Cécile Sorel, Simone, and Feraudy, all recent visitors. Having seen them and their various repertoires, there is one conclusion that cannot be overlooked . . . namely that the French theatre is, at the moment, poverty stricken in the matter of ideas and acting. Cécile Sorel (who is to France what the Statue of Liberty is to the United States) proved to be a ranter. Her repertoire was almost entirely drawn from the classics. Simone is not much better, less fire perhaps and less sense of gesture. She found a refuge largely in a similar repertoire. Feraudy, the best actor of the lot, had no modern play worthy of him. He wasted his genius upon the preachments by Brieux. And now Gémier appears to open in season with one of the worst pieces of trash seen in many a day. It is a play of intrigue and love affairs in which the word "*scandale*" is mentioned on an average of fifty times during each act. There are mistresses to right and to left. It bears the title "L'Homme qui Assassina" and is drawn from a novel of what the French pronounce "higg leaf" by a writer of the order of Marcel Prévost or Henri Bordeaux who turn out "sassiety" novels as if they were sausages. Altogether nothing like it has been seen in America since the première of "Lady Audley's Secret".

Gémier gave a fine intelligent performance, though the total effect was less than one expected from the size of the reputation which preceded him. All in all, the visits of the French theatre have led toward one conclusion . . . that there is more of vitality and artistry in one act by Eugene O'Neill than there is in all the modern plays now on the boards in Paris. It is rumored however that Jacques Copeau is to visit us, and it may be that he will bring from his hat new things which will redeem the records made by our other visitors.

Reversing affairs, it is well known that the inspiration for most of the modern music in France is drawn from the jazz, the blues, and the "nigger" music of our own soil. Stravinsky, Milhaud, and half a dozen other composers have drawn from it the materials of suites, ballets, and symphonies in the new manner. One of the sources lies in the Negro shows which have come into vast popularity since the ice was broken by "Shuffle Along". The latest is "From Dixie to Broadway", a revue with the simian Florence Mills in the leading rôle. One cannot hear this music without understanding that there is in it something new and full of vitality, upon which a world tired of old and perfected forms may turn. The music is irresistible and the dancing beyond even that. More than once during the evening, as some amiable Negro performed magical steps to intoxicating music, the audience, unsatisfied by mere clapping and pounding, broke into wild cheers.

Certainly one of the experiences of the month was the revival of Pinero's clockwork masterpiece "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray", with Ethel Barrymore playing one of the richest title rôles ever conceived. The play has the dusty aspect of a museum piece, a perfect exhibit of its period, the Nineties. Incidentally, the very situation has gone out of date. Surely in this day Paula Tanqueray would not have so bad a time. If she had a lurid past there would still be a place for her, above all else in English society where, according to Michael Arlen, Lady Whoosis and the Honorable Mrs. Whatsis, clad only in lingerie,

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go on mixed midnight bathing parties, and think nothing of a child or two on the left hand. Surely in this day Paula's difficulty would lie in quite another direction; she might find herself snubbed by the ladies of our day because she was far too much of a lady.

The acting of Miss Barrymore is good in places, though she is given too much to shouting and snuffling. It is not a subtle performance and not a very real one, but in the moments when she presents Mrs. Tanqueray as a distraught and nerve racked woman she is very fine.

So in a month there has been a variety which included Pavlowa, Jeritza, Gigli, Karsavina, Eugene O'Neill, Mary Morris (new to be sure but fit to be classed among these others), Ethel Barrymore, Simone, Firmin Gémier, and Florence Mills. As a nation we have been called boasters. Until now perhaps we have boasted without too much reason, but we have entered a new time in which an interest in the arts rises strong and full blooded. There is no longer any need for apology and false modesty, and the patronizing attitude from across the seas is on the verge of becoming out of date and a little ridiculous. One is tempted to unchain the Eagle and let him scream.

LOUIS BROMFIELD

## THE ROMAN

By Gladys Oaks

HIS eyes appal good people with their chill
Of frozen dreams. His soul is deadly wise.
Unceasing movement lurks within the still
And sleepless depths of his unwinking eyes.

Once, long ago, his brave, young spirit strained
To look into the hard and flashing light
Which severed all his visions. Thus he gained
The power and the blankness which is sight.

And so he is a stoic. He has form.
And blasted wills and hearts are not quite nice;
His manners may know grace, his skin be warm
Although his vitals freeze to stone and ice.

And he whose greatest pride is to be proud
Will laugh because he must not weep aloud.

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# THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and "*THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor specially recommends are marked with a star.*

ACES — *Putnam.* The Community Workers of the New York Guild for the Jewish Blind compile a volume of a dozen excellent stories, typical of the work of Kathleen Norris, Mary Roberts Rinehart, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and others.

* THE GREEN HAT — Michael Arlen — *Doran.* Sophisticated, glowing, highly colored romance of English society.

THE LAKE — Margaret Ashmun — *Macmillan.* This realistically poignant story of youthful passion and its fulfilment deserves more comment than space permits.

MARIPOSA — Henry Baerlein — *Boni, Liveright.* Though far from being as splendid a piece of work as "The House of the Fighting Cocks", it is clever and satiric; the harmless fun that the author pokes at the English will scarcely sever our diplomatic relations.

PEACOCK FEATHERS — Temple Bailey — *Penn.* A boyhood love which persists gives unusual heart interest to this tale of tender emotions.

RED DAWN — Pío Baroja — *Knopf.* The concluding volume of a trilogy, with revolt against Spanish social and economic conditions as its key.

THE DIVINE LADY — E. Barrington — *Dodd, Mead.* Somewhat historical story of the sweeping Lady Hamilton.

BRANDED — Robert Ames Bennet — *McClurg.* At first sight an ordinary ranch life tale, this has an unexpected wealth of character study.

ELSIE AND THE CHILD — Arnold Bennett — *Doran.* Elsie continued from the close of "Riceyman Steps", plus a dozen stories of Mr. Bennett's Londoners, high and humble.

UNITY — J. D. Beresford — *Bobbs-Merrill.* There is not a "to be remembered" line in the book, yet Beresford knows his public; if his entire public doesn't cry for him now, it will soon. What more could an author ask?

THE TREBLE CLEF — Edward C. Booth — *Dodd, Mead.* Just a touch of Barrie makes the whole world kin. That's not quite just, for "The Treble Clef" is really a fine sympathetic piece of writing.

THREE PILGRIMS AND A TINKER — Mary Borden — *Knopf.* Wherein Tim the Tinker goes on his way after coming to the lovers' rescue in a red coated, cold, fox hunting world.

THE SUBLIME JESTER — Ezra Brudno — *Brown.* The rather prosy novelization of the life of the unhappy Heine.

THE SINGLE HEART — J. E. Buckrose — *Stokes.* Wherein eighteen decides never to marry, until — as the jacket puts it — "she falls desperately, deliciously in love".

THE STREET OF THE EYE — Gerald Bullett — *Boni, Liveright.* Nine short stories with a morbid decadent beauty of their own.

THE WHITE OXEN — Kenneth Burke — *A. & C. Boni.* Stories and sketches that are so superficially clever that undoubtedly their author will eventually be heard from.

THE HOME-MAKER — Dorothy Canfield — *Harcourt, Brace.* Who is to make a home for our children when both parents work? Is it perhaps the father?

FRESH WATERS — Richard Washburn Child — *Dutton.* These short stories, though differing in style from Mr. Child's earlier works, are just as readable.

A GENTLEMAN OF COURAGE — James Oliver Curwood — *Cosmopolitan.* A new and resounding title for the old but zestful tale of woodland adventuring.



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THE UNKNOWN QUANTITY — Ethel M. Dell — *Putnam.* The usual collection of puppets go through the usual antics. "That is all ye know . . . and all ye need to know."

VULTURES OF THE DARK — Richard E. Enright — *Brentano.* New York's police commissioner shows us the brightly polished side of the police shield.

* MADAME CLAIRE — Susan Ertz — *Appleton.* A wise old lady tries to impart wisdom to youth.

NINA — Susan Ertz — *Appleton.* Marriage and its various trials find Nina puzzled but interested in her regard of and for the opposite sex.

SAILORS' WIVES — Warner Fabian — *Boni, Liveright.* Sex melodrama of wild hue and consequence.

* SO BIG — Edna Ferber — *Doubleday, Page.* A novel as wholesome as it is engrossing — a fine study of the mother of an unworthy but interesting son.

SUDDEN WEALTH — Henry James Forman — *Boni, Liveright.* The pernicious effects of wealth are splashed in glaring colors on an adequate canvas.

* A PASSAGE TO INDIA — E. M. Forster — *Harcourt, Brace.* The race problem clearly visualized and delicately portrayed.

* THE WHITE MONKEY — John Galsworthy — *Scribner.* Superb study of post-war society in England with the younger generation emphasized.

LITTLE NOVELS OF NOWADAYS — Philip Gibbs — *Doran.* Short stories and novelettes from the same milieu, afterwar Europe, as "The Middle of the Road".

* BALISAND — Joseph Hergesheimer — *Knopf.* Richard Bale of Balisand is a character to love, pity, and be thankful for. A fine novel.

* THREE FLIGHTS UP — Sidney Howard — *Scribner.* Novelettes of brilliance and power. (*See page 629.*)

THE ENCHANTED HILL — Peter B. Kyne — *Cosmopolitan.* An ex-aviator has a chance to prove himself in a good spacious New Mexican setting.

A. O. BARNABOOTH: HIS DIARY — Valery Larbaud — *Doran.* A charming example of what Einstein's theory can do to a potential Don Juan.

RUGGED WATER — Joseph C. Lincoln — *Appleton.* Rugged water and a rugged plot and rugged characters and a lovely, slightly less rugged girl make a well balanced Lincoln story that many readers will close with a sigh of satisfaction.

THE COMING OF AMOS — William J. Locke — *Dodd, Mead.* A painter, his nephew, a villain, and a Russian princess — mixed properly by an always deft craftsman.

THE PLASTIC AGE — Percy Marks — *Century.* American college life at its liveliest. Much discussed, true or not.

THE VALLEY OF VOICES — George Marsh — *Penn.* Hair raising adventures abound in a delightful tale of the wilderness.

* ELAINE AT THE GATES — W. B. Maxwell — *Doubleday, Page.* A close study of a rather inarticulate woman whose tenacity triumphs over tragic obstacles in the path of love.

WIDENING WATERS — Margaret Hill McCarter — *Harper.* This story blossoms into beauty as do the arid wastes of New Mexico after irrigation.

THE DOMINANT BLOOD — Robert McClure — *Doubleday, Page.* Don't catalogue this as a war book, though the tragic thread of war runs through it like a sputtering fuse.

EAST OF THE SETTING SUN — George Barr McCutcheon — *Dodd, Mead.* More "Graustark" thrills in that inimitable and highly romantic setting.

TO-MORROW AND TO-MORROW — Stephen McKenna — *Little, Brown.* The war ends and Sonia returns. And now endeth the last phase of McKenna's description of the lives of one hectic English generation. Hail and farewell!

CENTERVILLE, U. S. A. — Charles Merz — *Century.* Excellent short stories that slightly suggest "Spoon River Anthology" done in prose.

IN A SHANTUNG GARDEN — Louise Jordan Miln — *Stokes.* China again offers this author a chance to write of romance and success. This time, of a young American.

MY DAUGHTER HELEN — Allan Monkhouse — *Harcourt, Brace.* A piercing and delicate study of a middle class English family.

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PÍCARO — Charles Nordhoff — *Harper.* The spiritual growth of a man tried bitterly by love and by war, told in an arresting manner.

ROSE OF THE WORLD — Kathleen Norris — *Doubleday, Page.* A hard working heroine is always popular. Rose is no exception.

THE PASSIONATE QUEST — E. Phillips Oppenheim — *Little, Brown.* A story of three young people and their love difficulties in present day London.

THE LAND OF THE FATHERS — Sergey Gussiev Orenburgsky — *Dial.* Russia and the new freedom form the background for an intricate novel of why Ivan the Priest gave up his priesthood because of love.

WE THREE — Olga and Estrid Ott — *Minton, Balch.* A marshmallow of a tale, attempted via that most difficult of mediums — letters.

THE PEASANTS: AUTUMN — Ladislas St. Reymont — *Knopf.* Vigorous portraits; realistic setting for the drama of Polish peasants; a strong story and, happily, but one of four volumes. The author has just been awarded the 1924 Nobel Prize in Literature.

SAINT MARTIN'S SUMMER — Rafael Sabatini — *Houghton Mifflin.* Another Sabatini reprint — old France and a gentleman who uses a sword well and in a good cause.

* THE LITTLE FRENCH GIRL — Anne Douglas Sedgwick — *Houghton Mifflin.* A very readable love story with alternate French and English setting.

THE LORD OF THE SEA — M. P. Shiel — *Knopf.* A Jules Verne thriller, as purposeful as "early Wells", as stylistic as Melville — full of action, wildly unplausible, vigorously interesting.

ARNOLD WATERLOW — May Sinclair — *Macmillan.* Mystic visions and a very magnanimous gentleman make this a curious narrative of love and passion.

FOURSCORE — Sidney Herschel Small — *Bobbs-Merrill.* Four generations of pioneers help to build a better America.

THE LAW OF THE THRESHOLD — Flora Annie Steel — *Macmillan.* A practical story teller draws on a profound knowledge of India to write a fascinating tale.

IN THE LAND OF YOUTH — James Stephens — *Macmillan.* A fantastic story of Irish folk ways and lore — misty but beautiful. (*See page 603.*)

*MR AND MRS HADDOCK ABROAD — Donald Ogden Stewart — *Doran.* A parody outline of the American family going "abroad to Europe" with delightful inconsequences all around.

THE NEEDLE'S EYE — Arthur Train — *Scribner.* A coal strike with its significance from a sociological standpoint makes the focal point for another study of the smart set.

THE TATTOOED COUNTESS — Carl Van Vechten — *Knopf.* The exaggerated style and romance of today turned slyly upon the Victorian Era.

DEEP IN THE HEARTS OF MEN — Mary E. Waller — *Little, Brown.* Laborers' hearts, and how this author thinks they work.

THE FABRIC OF THE LOOM — Mary S. Watts — *Macmillan.* The characters are splendidly drawn, the social satire is clever, but we do get tired of this midwestern small town stuff.

PRILLILGIRL — Carolyn Wells — *Lippincott.* A wickedly tangled web is unsnarled with magic ease by the great detective Fleming Stone.

THE GLORY HOLE — Stewart Edward White — *Doubleday, Page.* Sometimes a beggar on horseback is a natural born rider but most of them fall off; in these skilful hands both varieties have made good copy.

HARVEY LANDRUM — Ridley Wills — *Simon, Schuster.* This realistic American novel has as its hero the chinless man — demonstrating that realism may be successfully allegorical.

THE SHOW-OFF — William Almon Wolff — *Little, Brown.* If we had not first seen the play, we should have described it as the most diverting book we have recently read.

LOTTERY — W. E. Woodward — *Harper.* In which a member of the American booboisie becomes a member of the American aristocracy by acquiring a million before he is thirty. Told with the same sly humor and keen satire as made "Bunk" so delightful.

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# THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS —

BOOKS THAT MAY HAVE ESCAPED YOU

*1. "The Crock of Gold" by James Stephens (Macmillan). Everyone has probably read it; if not, do so, for beauty of prose and fancy rarely excelled.*

*2. "Goin' on Fourteen" by Irvin S. Cobb (Doran). Irvin Cobb's story of a thirteen year old boy: human, lovable, honestly amusing.*

*3. "Brownstone Front" by Gilbert Gabriel (Century). A finely written study of New York life.*

*4. "New Hampshire" by Robert Frost (Holt). Robert Frost's latest volume. Pulitzer Prize winner, and deservedly.*

*5. "Beasts, Men and Gods" by Ferdinand Ossendowski (Dutton). One of the most romantic of all adventure stories — and true.*

## *Important Biography*

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, himself a personality striking and important in our intellectual and social life, has chosen to write a studious interpretative life of "Woodrow Wilson" (Houghton Mifflin). Whether his estimates are just or unjust, he tells a tragic tale with great dramatic instinct and psychological acuteness. The story of the Scotch-Irish sensitive boy, his antecedents, his overruling ambition, his friendships, triumphs and failures, is great in human as well as political significance. There is much good simple narrative writing in this biography. The vocabulary of a reviewer is limited. I dislike to seem hysterically enthusiastic over so many books, yet the touch of real genius is rare and there seems to me to be that in the following paragraph:

From day to day, from week to week, this great Celt, agile, unshaken, resourceful, even felicitous with a Titanic joy in his job, sat in the White House at the head of an army, accoutered with pen and ink and paper, books, libraries, laboratories, typewriters, telephones, clicking telegraph machines, world-reaching radios. He had commissioned Colonel Edward M. House as a sort of sub rosa generalissimo, and under House, President Wilson had conscripted a thousand brains, those brains which he and Colonel House considered the best brains. As commander-in-chief of that army, Wilson was gathering data from all over the world. He knew his history, of course; he knew something of political science in theory. He summoned men who knew more than he. He sent messengers all over the globe scouting, reporting, interpreting. Digested for him daily were tons of facts compressed into a few short truths. College professors, reporters, editors, jurists, a cloud of men interested in things of the mind brought to Joseph Wilson's son their treasure. While Janet Woodrow's son made war with a powerful right hand, Joseph Wilson's son made peace under the benediction of John Calvin. In his heart he knew that God rules; that men who are essentially noble are working in some great mystery toward some splendid hidden goal. He felt with an almost mad passion this truth about God and man. So all the force of the spirit which he could command from America, he set to work. Every day, briefed before him, he read the newspaper opinion of the world, of Germany, of Austria, of the Allies, of the Asiatic and Scandinavian neutrals alike — all opinions. It came to him predigested through many synthetic spiritual processes until he had the essence. Scores and scores of men, trained men, truth-loving men, with fact-finding antennæ, hurried over the earth to gather its spiritual harvest for Joseph Wilson's son. He took it, absorbed it, gave it out in many ways; in letters, in speeches, in public documents, all with one purpose, one terrific spiritual desire, to meet the will of the Prussians, "the will to conquer", and to break that will in shame. What Wilson said was winged across the world as were the words of no other man who ever trod this planet. No accident was this great voice. He set it up himself. The cable, the wireless, every physical machine that would spread his words, Wilson erected and used. The magic of the Arabian Nights was primitive compared with the work of this Yankee genie.



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Such writing is frequent in the pages of what I fancy is a great character study. One more bit I should like to quote:

> They took him to an Episcopal Cathedral, where he lies outside the fold of his father's faith; there in the tabernacle of a creed in which kings and powerful persons go to rest. He is not of the royal blood. So lying in the shadow of an alien covenant, he seems shy, remote, aloof — a Woodrow to the last, even in death! Out in Madison Square Garden in New York, standing among the throngs that heard the services was a little man in a fur-lined coat and a soft hat, who heard the prayers and the funeral service and the preacher's words from afar. He was Colonel Edward M. House, for ten years the dead man's dear friend and most trusted servant. Some quirk of fate, even across the dark portals, held him, would not let him relent, this grandson of Ann Adams, who vainly beat her soul out on "the iron gates of death!"

### *Three Flights Up*

SIDNEY HOWARD'S four novelettes gathered under the title "Three Flights Up" (Scribner) are written with brilliance and power. "Mrs. Vietch: A Segment of Biography" is the best American short story in my opinion since "Ethan Frome". Mr. Howard writes with dash and gusto. His characterizations are striking and consistent as well. The first story, "A Likeness of Elizabeth", has an original idea well developed; but in more or less conventional form. The second, "Transatlantic", is an ambitious character picture, remarkably successful. Jennie's problem of life and her almost unconscious solution of it are shown skilfully and subtly against an amazingly brilliant background of characters on an ocean liner. The Harvard youth, callow with a rather charming snobbery, is portrayed with something like genius. "Mrs. Vietch" is the realistic story of a woman's marriage and life, of a simple woman, simply motivated. "The God They Left Behind Them" has the insane sternness of New England mixed with a sense of the fantastic which has characterized most of Mr. Howard's plays. Of the younger short story writers, Sidney Howard, Thomas Beer, and Richard Connell seem most worthy of attention.

### *Further with Mr. Sherman*

IN "Points of View" (Scribner), Stuart Pratt Sherman has collected some of his longer papers. Perhaps the text, if text there be, is to be found on page forty six. "Be your residence urban or rural," he writes, "there is no provincialism so narrow as that developed by the inveterate maintenance of your own *point of view.*" His book, through no violent attempt to do so, exhibits him again as our most broad-minded critic in spite of all that has been written and spoken concerning his intellectual prejudices. Here we find again his admiration for W. C. Brownell and for Sinclair Lewis, his understanding of Brander Matthews, his tolerance for Tarkington, his amused recognition of his traditional enemy, Mencken. I like him best when he writes of life and literature, and their philosophical union, as in "Towards an American Type". The essay "Unprintable" is one of the clearest analyses of book censorship yet published. John Sumner, Ernest Boyd, James Branch Cabell, and all others vitally interested in the problem should study it. Mr. Sherman's nice irony often turns to gentle praise. One of the cleverest essays in the book is his review of some of our young journalistic essayists, in which he places Mr. Broun as follows:

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Young Heywood Broun is a Harvard man of about 30. He likes Stevenson, Hardy, H. G. Wells, Leonard Merrick and Mark Twain; and he holds that a girl should think twice before marrying any one who doesn't like them. He declares that some of his best friends have been Yale men, and, regretting the strained feelings between Yale and Harvard, he suggests that all might get happily together in crying, "To hell with Princeton!" He intends to meet Clayton Hamilton's standards for the dramatic critic, namely, to stand bareheaded in the nave of Amiens, to climb the Acropolis by moonlight, and to walk with whispers into the hushed presence of the Frari Madonna of Bellini before he attempts to review the performance of "Up in Mabel's Room". He likes the zoo and baseball, has a nice paper on "How to be a Lion Tamer", and believes that "children who don't see Charlie Chaplin have, of course, been robbed of much of their childhood". He has one two-year-old child who tells him that "Goliath loves you", and out of this wealth of parental experience he offers counsel to expectant motherhood. He has one touch of radicalism: in the rare intervals when he is not thinking of himself as the first parent, he informs his readers that Dr. Holt is a better guide to the upbringing of children than their grandmothers! He has courage: he doesn't hesitate to stuff all this into one container with dialogue, fables, and parodies, and call it a book.

Mr. Sherman ends by bestowing upon the group the kindly accolade:

> They tend to make the stranger at home in the world, and the lonely and insignificant man in town or country, who talks with no one morning, noon or night, feel yet, as he opens his paper, that he is not the only one of his kind, but that he is neighboured on all sides by his kindred and that in farmhouse and town mansion and White House there are millions of other strangers, essentially as lonely and insignificant as he. This is, perhaps, as near to a homelike feeling as a man can expect to come in this world.

### *Life Diversified*

THREE wider realms could scarcely be picked than those of hobo, day laborer, and actor. A glowing and readable picture of the American scene therein. Jim Tully, Pascal D'Angelo, Francis Wilson, present rich autobiographical material. "Beggars of Life" (A. and C. Boni) is not a pretty book. The language of the railroad track and the hobo level has a beauty, perhaps, but a beauty peculiarly its own. Nevertheless, Jim Tully writes with a sense of drama and pathos, and this is his best book. There are many bright sketches of characters amusing as well as grim. There is, for example, "Amy, the Beautiful Fat Girl". There are macabre pictures such as the death of Oklahoma Red, and there is one excellent piece of reportorial description in which Tully visualizes for us a hobo hangout. It is called "The Jungle". This is an unusual book: a series of autobiographical sketches, rather than an autobiography, but authentic, readable, and dramatic.

Pascal D'Angelo, the "pick and shovel poet" as he is styled on the jacket of his book — "Pascal D'Angelo, Son of Italy" (Macmillan) — is a rare person, a simple person with the sense of great poetry in him, whose life story as he has written it is quiet, amusing, and, at times, beautiful. From his native Italy he came to America, where he worked on roads and railroads. But the artistic impulse was strong in him. The story of his work, of his fellow workmen, of his dreams, of their fulfilment, is worthy of a place alongside Edward Bok and Ludwig Lewisohn. There has certainly never been a document like it produced in America. This simple peasant with his rich Latin inheritance, hearing "Aida" at Sheepshead Bay, dreams of writing an opera. But music is difficult, although he struggles valiantly with mandolin and guitar. He begs a dictionary and starts exploring the magic of words, whereupon poetry results, and a measure of success. It is a great romance, isn't it? A personal narrative of drama and beauty.

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Francis Wilson, the urbane and sprightly friend of Eugene Field and Joseph Jefferson, is strangely linked with these other two. His "Life of Himself" (Houghton Mifflin) is chatter and anecdote before the fire at the Players' Club, stories of Edwin Booth and Walt Whitman, defense of actor as against the manager, a good deal about "Erminie" of course, and what is actually a profusion of entertaining narrative. There is much that the stage-ambitious should heed when words are vouchsafed from a veteran as wise as Mr. Wilson:

Like every other actor I have known who has had a measure of success, and especially those who have had no such measure, my first thoughts of the theater were born of love for it. The ambition, secret at first, to shine in it, to be worthy to shine in it, came early and came strong. Present-day psychologists implore us to search out the bent of our children's minds and give it all encouragement — full swing. I swung. Not, however, from any special direction or encouragement, but from sheer inclination — and necessity. What the truly ambitious person thinks of in connection with the medium in which he longs to work is not money, but the opportunity to express himself. It was so with me. I did not think of money in relation to acting. I just thought of acting. With your true actor money is always a secondary consideration. On no other theory is it possible to explain the hardships, even the humiliations, the devoted actor will undergo for the privilege of practicing his art. Managers know about this. How well they know about it! How they will pinch the novice to pay the "star", who has come to know and to exact his value. It seems to be an inherited trait. Colley Cibber was satirically merry over the "menagers" of his day in this respect. They "menaged" so skillfully that the "shares" of the actors showed no profit.

— *J. F.*

## PRAYER FOR THE RIGHT VOCATIONS

By Daniel Henderson

LORD GOD, give him who loves the sea
A ship's uncertain destiny!

Give town men, who for fields entreat,
The benediction of the wheat!

Give merchant souls the haggling throng!
Grant to the poet, kept from song

By the loud commerce of bazaars,
A lone path under sun and stars

To where a whispering forest stream
Shall summon from his heart its dream!

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# A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

## MR. BROWNELL AND MR. MENCKEN

By Stuart P. Sherman

THE juxtaposition of the two names above is ultimately due neither to the editor's whim nor to the reviewer but to destiny. It is symbolical. It represents what the critical effort of the last ten or fifteen years has been striving to bring to pass, namely, a confrontation of the literary aristocracy with the literary proletariat. Hope of an exciting engagement, however, will once more be frustrated, as it has been many times in the past, by the cause which kept the fight between Sebastian and Sir Andrew Aguecheek from really coming off: one of the combatants, as soon as he discovers himself in the presence of a competent adversary, ignominiously shuns the conflict, contenting himself, as he retreats, with administering a few cuffs to an unknown man who has just dashed up to the scene from Texas. Perhaps this sounds a little mysterious. I shall stay just long enough to make it clear. (I am not reviewing either of the books here mentioned but am merely discussing a point raised by bringing them together.)

Mr. Brownell is a critical representative of our literary aristocracy, and nowhere is his theory more blue-blooded than in his latest book, "The Genius of Style". By a literary aristocracy I mean that small highly civilized minority of writers who love perfection and seek it, who love truth and pursue it, who love beauty and create it. These quests are all so difficult that even to undertake them implies seriousness; to persevere in them involves fortitude and renunciations; to succeed in them denotes a fine and rare faculty, the faculty of discrimination, the talent for recognizing excellence, and a nature so constituted that the joy which it experiences in embracing the best compensates for the loss of all inferior pleasures. Since the best has no exclusive partiality for any time or land, the seeker of it, the true literary aristocrat, avoids chauvinism and the heady infatuations of the hour. Inevitably he is a citizen of the world, with the historical sense, the culture, the civility of the world's best citizens. If he often invites polemic, it is always with adversaries who use the weapons of the civilized minority and observe the code of duelists.

Though "civilized minority" is Mr. Mencken's favorite catchword, he is, as a matter of fact, obviously the critical champion of our literary proletariat; and the object of his polemic has often appeared to be the destruction of the civilized minority and the merging of all in one undistinguished rabble. By literary proletariat I mean that very large body of barbaric, uncivilized, or semi-civilized writers who shy dead cats at perfection, who like a little truth in a great bulk of libel, and who love the ugly and create it in abundance. These quests are so easy that they may be carried on with a minimum of seriousness and discrimination. For many years now Mr. Mencken has talked about an intellectual aristocracy and has given



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himself out as its champion. There was a time when I thought that he was a bad critic because he was incapable of discrimination. I have gradually abandoned that conception of him, to substitute for it the notion that he is a nearly first rate all-around comedian. For to present himself as the spokesman of the civilized minority, as he does, and then to bring all the power of his example and his trenchant rhetoric to bear upon the task of teaching his fellow countrymen to affirm their ordinary selves with all their might — this seems to me the height of bourgeois comedy.

Here and there in the writings of Mr. Mencken you will find touching pages in which he intimates that he is about the only critic living who dares to tell the truth. If his courage is as great as he vaunts, it is hard to understand why he does not indulge himself in the pleasure of accurate and scrupulous veracity more frequently. Mr. Mencken talks about truth as if she were his mistress but he handles her like an iceman. The only reasonable explanation that occurs to me is his proletarian insensibility to distinctions. Like the ordinary two-fisted husky proletarian, he seems quite unable to appreciate the fact that total disregard of all the shades of truth becomes in the long run tantamount to total disregard for truth. In æsthetic matters and in human relations generally, truth is not a thing to be got at with a sledge hammer or a steam shovel. Mr. Mencken seldom employs more delicate instruments than these. More and more he shuns the fine work of literary criticism: he cares to tackle nothing smaller than the devastation of a literary generation by gas attack, or the destruction or heroization of an order of society. No one who ever set up in these States as a literary critic before his time, no one, certainly, who conceived that he had an audience of civilized men to listen to him, ever attempted to get away with such wholesale misrepresentation as Mr. Mencken attempts in the opening essay of his fourth series of "Prejudices".

This essay is entitled "The American Tradition". Now it is transparently clear that what Mr. Mencken desires to accomplish by this essay is to bring the American tradition, as represented by the American Academy and in particular as interpreted by half a dozen such more or less academic persons as Mr. Brownell, Mr. Erskine, Mr. Boynton, Mr. Matthews, Professor Beers, and myself — to bring this tradition and its exponents into even greater disrepute with his readers than they now enjoy. Possibly that is a very desirable and praiseworthy object. I, for one, should be perfectly willing to discuss the matter with him. I see no particular reason why he should dread to discuss it. He is not without acumen and he has a strong flow of language. In all probability, if he applied himself to the task, he might discuss the matter very well. But Mr. Mencken with a kind of proletarian cunning and caution greatly prefers to get behind a wall and heave decayed vegetables at the objects of his aversion. Contrary to his practice, I shall illustrate precisely what I mean.

He begins his essay in the following fashion:

> Ever since Dr. William Crary Brownell, *de l'Académie Américaine*, published his little volume "Standards" in 1917, a vast hullabaloo has been going on among the native, white, Protestant *Gelehrten* of the Republic, particularly in the open spaces of the South and the Middle West, in favor of what they call the American tradition in letters. Perhaps I libel Brownell, a

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worthy if somewhat gummy man, by hinting that he started this whooping. . . .

Now Mr. Brownell has published a number of books, including "Standards", thus thrust into the front of Mr. Mencken's two fisted essay in fustigation. These books of Mr. Brownell's are not "out of print". They are accessible to the public. If Mr. Mencken has any appetite for the truth about Mr. Brownell's position, he is quite at liberty to discover what it is, and whether he has libeled Mr. Brownell. But no, Mr. Mencken backs circumspectly away from that dangerous quarter, without adducing a single sentence to justify the overture to his essay. He backs away from the real object of his assault and backs into an obscure article by a Mr. Doughty of Texas, dealing with current literature. That article he describes in detail and deigns to quote from freely.

It does not appear to have been written with great delicacy. It has indeed something of that over-robust manner which we have come to associate with Mr. Mencken's own disciples. Mr. Doughty is quoted as characterizing the current American literary product and its producers as "swept up rottenness and garbage", "a horde of chancre-laden rats", "a devil's crew of perverted drug addicts", engaged in a "flabby and feeble assault . . . upon that ancient decency that for unnumbered generations", etc. In brief Mr. Doughty maintains, thus Mr. Mencken concludes his report, "that the whole movement is no more than a foul conspiracy to tear down the flag, uproot the Republic and exterminate the Nordic Blond, and that, in consequence, it is the duty of every American who is a member 'of a white Nordic race, save the Teutonic' to come sliding down the pole, grab the tarpot, and go galloping to the alarm".

Not having read Mr. Doughty's discourse myself, I have, of course, not the slightest notion whether Mr. Mencken has correctly represented it. Mr. Mencken boasts, with obvious reason, that he is quite above any such petty business as faithfully interpreting another writer. No one, so far as I have heard, has ever charged him with any such picayune performance. But that is not now the point. The point is that immediately on the conclusion of this summary of Mr. Doughty's views, Mr. Mencken remarks: "The doctrine thus stated in harsh terms by the dreadful Doughty is, in its essence, precisely the doctrine of his more urbane colleagues — of Brownell *de l'Académie Américaine*, of Brander Matthews *de l'Académie Américaine*, of Sherman *de l'Académie Américaine*, of Erskine *de l'Institut National*, of Boynton, of old Beers, of all the rest".

If this is to be regarded as some of Mr. Mencken's fun, very well, let us all laugh, and magnanimously concede that his comedy not infrequently rises to a higher level. But if one is really asked to regard such stuff as criticism, if one is asked to regard such tactics as sportsmanship, then one must be allowed to observe that our "spokesman for the civilized minority" has here been moved by "the eternal spirit of the Populace". My own growing suspicion is that, despite all his professions of toughmindedness, despite his oft avowed joy in glorious battle, Mr. Mencken is at heart a confirmed pacifist with as profound a distaste as Sir Andrew's for cold steel.

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The Genius of Style. By W. C. Brownell. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Prejudices: Fourth Series. By H. L. Mencken. Alfred A. Knopf.

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## THE STAGE: ON AND OFF

By Arthur Bartlett Maurice

THE significance of the title of the book dealing with the career of the late Sir Charles Hawtrey (he was knighted in 1922, some fifteen months before his death) lies in the fact that the stage parts most conspicuously associated with his name were those of monumental liars. Hawtrey, possibly the most finished English comedian of his generation, and remembered by American playgoers as well as English playgoers for his performances in "A Message from Mars" and "The Man from Blankley's", was by passion a racing man and only by necessity an actor. W. Somerset Maugham suggests that Hawtrey forgot the names of half the characters he played but never that of a horse he backed. It was with very little training that he went on the stage, there to win immediate distinction. Educationally, he was a product of Eton and Rugby, and throughout his life he adhered to the aims, ideals, and ambitions of the English public school boy. His theatrical success was due simply to natural talent, and an instinctive sense for the stage.

Perhaps Hawtrey was most closely identified with the part of Horace Parker in "A Message from Mars". The play was the work of a young American, Richard Ganthony, who, building upon a suggestion drawn from Dickens's "Christmas Carol", produced a melodrama which had gone the round of the New York managers and been refused by all before it was taken to England and offered to Hawtrey. Hawtrey saw its possibilities, bought it with the understanding that he was free to make whatever alterations he wished, and produced it as a comedy. Two years later Ganthony saw the play in New York and informed a friend that he would not have recognized it as his own.

Dying, like Robert Louis Stevenson and Guy de Maupassant, at the early age of forty four, William Clyde Fitch left behind him the fruit of a prodigious labor. In all he wrote sixty two plays. Of these thirty six were original, twenty one adaptations, mostly from the French, and five dramatizations of novels. He also wrote two vaudeville sketches, "Algy" for Vesta Tilly and "The Manicure Girl" for Zelda Sears. He collaborated with Cosmo Gordon-Lennox in "Her Sister"; with Leo Ditrichstein in three adaptations, "Gossip", "A Superfluous Husband", and "The Head of the Family"; with Edith Wharton he dramatized "The House of Mirth"; and with Willis Steell, Alfred Henry Lewis's "Wolfville".

Clyde Fitch's first success came in his twenty fifth year with the production of "Beau Brummell" by Richard Mansfield. The actor saw the stage possibilities of the famous dandy of the Regency, but was not satisfied with the play that had been written by Blanchard Jerrold. He turned for advice to E. A. Dithmar and the latter suggested Fitch. A letter from Mansfield to Fitch under date of November 15, 1889 indicates something of the rapidity with which the play was written. Mansfield's letter read, in part: "I want Beau Brummell at once — at *once*, do you hear? You must sit up (I don't know *why* you should sit *up* — you can lie down, if you like) day and night and do it." The building of the play involved a dispute between actor and dramatist. Fitch's idea was the death of the Beau in his attic. Mansfield wanted the safe and happy ending and suggested

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that the King and all the other characters should come back to the forsaken courtier. There was a compromise by which Fitch brought them all back in the Beau's imagination, the real persons arriving only at the moment of his death.

Like many other Americans of his generation, Walter Prichard Eaton was first stimulated to an interest in the stage by witnessing in boyhood an itinerant production of "Uncle Tom's Cabin". The memory of that performance and its aftermath ("No sooner had Little Eva ascended to a better, brighter world — indeed before she had been received into that celestial abode — than Simon Legree, *sans* devilish slouch hat and boots and whip, was seen to rush forth and begin pulling stay pegs") is, in a measure, the keynote of the present volume. The chapters that make it up are essentially of yesterday. Once more Siddons and Macready stalk across the stage, and pages from the life of Thomas Holcroft illustrate the complex existence of a strolling player in the eighteenth century.

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The Truth at Last. By Charles Hawtrey. Edited with an introduction by W. Somerset Maugham. Little, Brown and Co.

Clyde Fitch and His Letters. By Montrose J. Moses and Virginia Gerson. Little, Brown and Co.

The Actor's Heritage. Scenes from the Theatre of Yesterday and the Day Before. By Walter Prichard Eaton. The Atlantic Monthly Press.

## A DISTINGUISHED TRAVEL BOOK

By William McFee

WHEN Mr. Tomlinson tells us how a letter arrived at the London offices of his paper "The Nation", suggesting he go to the East Indies, "to the Moluccas" as he phrases it, we are bound to assume that the letter came, either from a committee of book lovers who had read "The Sea and the Jungle" and wanted the author of that work to do it again, or from a publisher with a magnificent conception of his duty to society. Probably the latter solution is the correct one, and we can only be grateful to the publisher in question. Mr. Tomlinson asks on one page, What is the use of travel? It is time somebody asked this question, because of late years we have had a great many books describing far distant places, some of them expensively illustrated with pictures of the authors and native women, and evidently designed to show the public what lucky and unconventional fellows those authors were. Other books had for their text the vigorous one hundred per cent Nordicism of the authors and showed how very inferior other nations are to us.

"Tide Marks", being some records, as the subtitle says, of a journey to the beaches of the Moluccas and the forest of Malaya in 1923, seems to proceed upon quite other lines. To begin with, as everyone who has read "The Sea and the Jungle" and "London River" is aware, we are in the hands of a distinguished writer of prose. There are probably plenty of people who feel no particular reaction to Tomlinson's style. The present reviewer, however, regards it as a luxury for the soul. He admires it so much that he even forgets his author's political views, knowing by now that there are flies in all amber. When Mr. Tomlinson attributes the meekness and crushed attitude of the Javanese to generations of foreign bureaucratic rule he is looking at the Javanese through his political spectacles, because he would

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find the same crushed appearance among the poor folk of South American republics who have had the blessings of republican government and the Monroe Doctrine for a century. We can let that slide. It is of no moment. The author of "Tide Marks" is too fine an artist to let his political views spoil the picture.

It is a pity that in so brief a review no space can be spared for quotations. But it is impossible to conclude without an allusion to the last page of this splendid book, where the author, who has been profoundly dissatisfied with England on various counts since the war, suddenly feels what he calls "an awakening of understanding". He adds: "I felt the inward glow of a new and deep desire. I cannot tell you what that shadow was, for, though transcendently it was there, it was dim and mysterious, almost beyond vision; England!" And as the ship moves on toward the coasts of his native land he feels the presence of the Spirit of England on the waters and exults in it. And that is true indeed of travel to distant regions. It brings home to you the fundamental personality of your own land.

"Tide Marks" is the best travel book I have read for many years.

Tide Marks. By H. M. Tomlinson. Harper and Bros.

## DREAMS AND TAPESTRIES

By David Morton

IT is nearly a commonplace to point out that the region of artistic values, nowadays, is a highly disturbed and chaotic one. It is a time of skepticisms and revaluations, in which the boldest scarcely dare to speak with certainty. He is a brave and optimistic mariner who comes to port with what he imagines to be some salvage of undisputed and indisputable values. Yet, it is difficult to escape the feeling that a work in which the dream and passion and memory of life become articulate in vivid and rememberable symbols, is authentic poetry.

A reading of William Griffith's "Loves and Losses of Pierrot" gives rise to some such reflections as these. This is a revised and enlarged edition of a slender volume which appeared some years ago, and won its way into the affectionate regard of a limited circle—a circle which will be delighted, and should be enlarged, by this new edition.

What we have here is the lighter movements of the spirit — the moods and dreams and memories and delicate passions of humanity — projected into a moonlit world, in the persons of Pierrot and his companions. There, the drama out of which our dream life is made acts itself out before our eyes, in a rarefied air where the faintest colors are perceptible, the slightest movement apprehended, and the most delicate sound audible. It is a hushed world and a dimly lighted one, peopled with figures in a dream — but it is a world that each of us knows for his own intimate possession, and the figures are recognizably those of our own passions, bodied forth in these legendary persons. Here are loves and joys and griefs; here are memories and regrets, and longings and despairs, projected in songs and sighs, in "triumphs and tragedies" of these legendary figures. In that remote world of hush and moonlight, there transpires with completion and without inhibition the spiritual gesture that in our workaday world is dwarfed and defeated. There is art in this — the revelation of

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significance, the exhibition of completeness, through the medium of a world that is remote and tranquil. This is not the way of the "new poetry", with its hot immediacy, its loud-speaking, its hard and brilliant surfaces and glittering edges, its somewhat frantic cries. The book is distinctive, in the immediate circumstances, as well as in a longer view.

The literary qualities of the poetry itself are sensitive and radiant phrasing, a tentative, never insistent music, a delicate grace of form and movement.

On the whole, the "Loves and Losses of Pierrot" is a distinctive and distinguished contribution to a period already crowded with rich and varied store.

One turns to Mrs. Conkling's new book, "Ship's Log", for other things. What one reader, at least, values Mrs. Conkling for, is on the one hand a sensuous imagery which, in any considerable volume of her work, becomes a gorgeous tapestry, rich in color and design; and on the other hand, a clear singing lyricism. To these two, must be added the delicate delineation of mood to which she occasionally gives herself — as in the sea poems in the present volume. All these qualities are in evidence, in varying degrees of effectiveness, in "Ship's Log", a book redolent of voyagings. What the voyager has brought home to the reader is the above mentioned sea moods, intimate emotional experience, and colorful and exotic picturization. The section of the book entitled "Happy Go Lucky", representing the lyric side of the author's gift, has nothing in particular to do with ships and voyages; but to one reader, this constitutes the most successful and the most delightful portion of the book. The lyrics are delicate, penetrative, lovely — and they sing.

The price so often paid for rich sensuousness, Mrs. Conkling pays. There is too frequently inordinate profusion of imagery; there is want of lean economy and discernible design. The individual images are brilliant and colorful, and where sparingly and happily distributed produce an effect of richness. Where they are otherwise distributed, the result is confusion.

In the poems of intimate and personal emotion, one encounters, here and there, a poignant, throat catching passage — and elsewhere the day's characteristic approach to such matters: the curious, scientific writing about an emotion, instead of the emotion itself become articulate. The process is primarily scientific and intellectual. The original emotion — in this modern method — is present in the character of an experience submitting to analysis.

One turns aside, a little wearily, from those poems, to some of the less sumptuous tapestries, to the poems of sea changes and to three or four songs of beautiful clarity and simplicity and singing genius.

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Loves and Losses of Pierrot. By William Griffith. E. P. Dutton and Co.
Ship's Log and Other Poems. By Grace Hazard Conkling. Alfred A. Knopf.

## ACQUIRED CHARACTERS

By Lorande Loss Woodruff

MAN has been dubbed an "acquisitive animal", and certainly his propensity for employing and augmenting the material accomplishments of his predecessors is chiefly responsible for his commanding position as "lord of creation". But although man differentiates himself from the rest of the living world by his material endowment, he finds himself

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one with all nature in regard to his biological heritage — the principles which underlie inheritance in plants and other animals apply with equal force to him. Studies in genetics during recent years have established this unequivocally.

Now these same studies indicate very definitely that characteristics acquired by the body of a plant or animal during its lifetime are not transmitted to its offspring, and if this is well founded it means that human inheritance suffers the same limitations; though not necessarily to man's disadvantage, because acquired characters may be bad as well as good — a very important fact largely neglected by those who look to such characters for human salvation. However, at first glance the non-inheritance of acquired characters appears rather serious to the layman, especially when he hears the false rumor that nothing he does makes any difference to the heritage of his future children — a *non sequitur* which some would credit more readily to a vociferous political propagandist than to a euthenist — and his demand to know more about the matter has led to the publication of popular expositions of this most highly technical phase of modern genetical investigations.

If the truth be told, the educated layman has about as much chance of correctly appraising the evidence for and against the inheritance of acquired characters as the biologist has of evaluating Einstein's contributions to theoretical physics; but if he desires a highly partizan exposition of the so called "unorthodox" view that somatic changes are transmissible to posterity, two recently published books are at his service. Dr. Kammerer of Vienna provides a stout volume of fifty four chapters of fact and fiction, pleading and cajolery, entitled "The Inheritance of Acquired Characteristics", and his most notable convert, Professor MacBride of London, distils the essence in his handy "Introduction to the Study of Heredity".

Perhaps it may not be presumptuous to remind the prospective readers of these volumes that the crux of the question involved is whether a specific change in the body of an individual can specifically modify the germ cells of that individual so that the germ cells will reproduce the specific change in the body of the offspring. There can be little doubt that the environment brings about directly changes in the germ cells and that these may affect the heritage of the offspring, but this is not the question at issue — and it is a fundamentally different one. The consensus of opinion of biologists is that changes in the individual body due to nurture, use, and disuse are not transmitted as such, because there is no crucial positive evidence (unless one is sufficiently gullible to accept Dr. Kammerer's interpretations of his experiments), and much negative evidence, and also because there is no known mechanism by which a specific acquired character of the body can so influence the germ cells that this character will be reproduced as such or in any representative degree — that it can enter the heritage and be born again.

So the reviewer falls far, very far, short of the optimism expressed on the jacket of Dr. Kammerer's book which declares that it enfolds "the epoch-making work which won for Dr. Kammerer the acclaim as the second Darwin. This work covers his successful experiments which solved the problem Darwin despaired of and which was universally held as being unsolvable." As a matter of fact,

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Dr. Kammerer has solved nothing, but irrespective of whether or no acquired characters are inherited, every good citizen will say Amen to his peroration voicing "the opinion that our children and our children's children will much more speedily attain what once we diligently acquired. It will be easier for them to execute what we mastered after hard training; they will survive easily to what we almost succumbed. What we looked for, they will find; where we could make only a beginning, for them it will be happy consummation; and where we battle with victory still uncertain, they, let us hope, will conquer."

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The Inheritance of Acquired Characteristics. By Dr. Paul Kammerer. Translated by A. Paul Maerker-Branden. Boni and Liveright.

An Introduction to the Study of Heredity. By E. W. MacBride. Henry Holt and Co. (Home University Library.)

## BRITISH FACE CARDS

By Frederick Harris

IF the English keep on writing so entertainingly about their celebrities, it is highly probable that at least the "civilized minority" in America will come to know something of the character, customs, and manners of those curious British Islanders. It is always a particular pleasure to have Philip Guedalla point out the notables. Well informed, observant, tolerant, and witty, he stands as it were with a hand inside your elbow and explains who and what they are, fitting them all nicely into the current scheme of things. Since he is not afflicted either with the Gentleman with a Duster's urgent sense of mission or with Lytton Strachey's active dislike of prominent people, he is thoroughly engaging from first to last. Of course, the pleasant flavor of classical allusion will appeal particularly to American readers.

Mr. Guedalla's earlier volumes of essays, for all their genuine radiance, were somewhat disappointing; here and there the editor should have refused point-blank his "kind permission to reprint". These too brief flashes in every direction are tantalizing when you get them all together — though, of course, an author must live. The present volume, "A Gallery", presents a satisfying unity. With only slight reservation, we may accept the author's word that these studies were intended to make a book. The writers and politicians selected for the ordeal are all essential parts of British public life in the twentieth century. It is true that M. Anatole France and M. Marcel Proust do appear, but these distinguished foreigners are introduced for ulterior purposes. M. France does not seem to fit into the company.

The literary studies, though they deal with much studied men, all illuminate fresh aspects of the world of letters; and the cause of the dissemination of truth is greatly furthered by the author's ability to be as graceful and interesting in presenting a bouquet as in offering the obnoxious berry. For example, of Rudyard Kipling: "He sharpened the English language to a knife-edge, and with it he has cut brilliant patterns on the surface of English prose." But the chief interest, in the present exciting stage in English politics, centres where the author is most at home — among the politicians. Fourteen of these gentlemen are offered for inspection, each one as presenting some broad fact of English political history.

The Seven Sleepers include Stanley Baldwin, the business man in politics;

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Curzon who "walks through public life like a minuet"; Ramsay MacDonald, a part of the head of the Labor party which "so manifestly, even a shade pretentiously cerebrates"; Bonar Law, "more indubitably not Mr. Lloyd George than any of the other competitors"; and three "sons of famous statesmen", Austen Chamberlain and Lords Robert and Hugh Cecil. It will be remembered that the original Seven Sleepers ducked under cover in the Decian persecution, slept a couple of centuries, then awoke only to die. Whether or not Mr. Guedalla had this in mind when he chose the title, it would be hard to say. As for the Seven Lamps of Liberalism, their gleams — cold blue, warm yellow, and hot red — have a peculiar significance now that Liberalism surely seems fated to walk forth into the gathering dusk. These figures are alive, alike "the slim plant of Mr. Morley", the cheerfully truculent Lloyd George of whom "it is not easy to think . . . as a mere fragment of history", and Winston Churchill, once "a Boanerges of the Budget League", now shivering in his bed for fear of Bolshevists. Of Liberalism itself we get flashing glimpses — "There has always been a strange duality in English Liberalism. Its motive power has invariably come from the rushing waters of Nonconformity. But the machine which they set in motion was frequently a more dignified affair, with faint pretensions to aristocracy; and the wheels of the Whig system rotated gravely under the disorderly impulsion of Radicalism."

The end of the book is blurred by three "Shadows" — an empress, a French novelist, and a London hostess. This will not do. If ghosts there must be, why not Salisbury, Gladstone, Disraeli, or *ce terrible milor* Palmerston? The others deserve at least this.

A Gallery. By Philip Guedalla. G. P Putnam's Sons.

## OLD WOMAN

By Marion Strobel

OLD woman, you have fought well to attain
This dignity of sitting by the fire
With your white cat. You are quite motionless:
Large hands crossed, and tired eyes that do not tire

Of looking at the flames. Your dress — black silk —
Your lace cap — rosepoint, thin as your thin hair —
Sharpen the tender blossom of your face
Into a cameo for you to wear.

You make pictures of yourself: dream you are
Beloved, a mother . . . Oh it has taken
You so long, so many years of struggle,
To achieve the means to be forsaken!

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# IN BRIEF REVIEW

ONE reason why Mr. Phelps is so entertaining to read is because you think you will never remember anything he has said. But you do. In his new book, "As I Like It, Second Series" (Scribner), you spend, first, a stimulating hour reading the contents aloud. "Weak Eyes and Work. Is Harmless an Insult? My Sin. Do Sheep Drink? Fur Kissing. Eight Fat Raisins." You enjoy his comments on writers. And you enjoy his pride in that statement about Duse: "I simply watched a well-oiled automaton." Not many have said that. Then when you discover that he considers Don Quixote and Tristram Shandy both very dull, the book becomes a treasure.

Biographies in which the biographer does not try to reveal himself as well as the subject are rare. In a new study of "Walt Whitman" by George Rice Carpenter (Macmillan) there is consciousness of no one but Whitman, seen from within and from without, during his entire life. It is so quiet and unassuming in style, so plain and truthful, that the subject becomes amazingly real and powerful. The facts about the man are there. His philosophy and life are examined, not with the ecstasy of Dr. Bucke and cosmic consciousness, but without prejudice. When you have finished the book you know Whitman in a rather permanent and big way.

A tragic interest touches Arthur S. Hildebrand's "Magellan" (Harcourt, Brace). A publisher's note sent out with the book informs the reader that Hildebrand has been unheard from since August and has almost certainly lost his life in a venturous voyage in the North. "Magellan", perhaps suggested by the four hundredth anniversary of the circumnavigation of the globe, and of timely interest because of the circumaviation just accomplished, is an excellent short account. We were frankly disappointed by both the brevity and the absence of those arts of the biographer to which such men as Strachey and the author of "Ariel" have accustomed us. Mr. Hildebrand's book is the kind that calls forth such adjectives as "simple", "direct", "workmanlike". His hero remains a shadowy historical personage, never for one moment becoming flesh and blood. The other great defect is a very sketchy background, so that the ordinary reader unacquainted with the period will gain little by this account. The book is handsomely made with old maps as end papers.

It is not only readers of novels and students of arithmetic who peep at the back of the book. The reviewer of "A Popular History of English Poetry" (Appleton) did the same in order to ascertain what T. Earle Welby had to say about the modern poets. There wasn't much to find. The author saw fit "to make an end of this history with Mr. Hardy", mentioning de la Mare, Masefield, Hodgson, and writers of vers libre as not yet subject for historical consideration. The book is designed for a public which knows English poetry largely through anthologies. A real history would



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record the development of a national body of poetry. But Mr. Welby sees English poetry not as the result of continuous process but as the product of individual genius. On individual poets he comments very well — especially on those of the nineteenth century. This is an English book; Walt Whitman and Poe are the only Americans mentioned.

William Allen White knows a good political battle when he sees one, and is a keen enough and honest enough journalist to spread his own enthusiasm among his readers. His "Politics: The Citizen's Business" (Macmillan) is a handy and authoritative story of this year's presidential campaign, a thrilling yarn, inspired in spots and never dull despite much searching political analysis by "a convinced though not excited liberal". Personalities and atmosphere are handled with rollicking gusto. The Republican convention of "snappy young bond salesmen" is contrasted with the Democratic riot, "The Tragedy of the Spilled Beans". This lively bit of history is prefaced by a study of the "invisible government", which the Emporia editor would fight by conjuring it, in the name of a Constitutional amendment, to reveal itself and become part of the visible government of our country.

No doubt the "great race" of Nordics has suffered somewhat from a certain amount of super-press-agenting. Too much may have been claimed for it, and Dr. Lothrop Stoddard has, occasionally, left himself open to detailed criticism by the exact scientists as well as by those who are not dispassionate in their attacks upon him. But it remains true that his statement of the case is impressive and that the main lines of his general argument, resting upon a division of the chief actors in European history into the three "races" of Mediterraneans, Alpines, and Nordics, are not upset by any of these criticisms. Like most enthusiasts he has tried to prove too much, but that does not invalidate his basic proposition. His analyses of the makeup of European peoples as they are today, in "Racial Realities in Europe" (Scribner), do throw much light, plausibly, not only upon past history but upon current events. His dissection of modern Germany, which displays its progressive "Alpinization", is peculiarly convincing. And there is demonstrably accurate observation in his division of France into three layers (with Alpines as the meat in the sandwich), though here one doubts something of the sharpness of the racial dividing lines. He is also illuminating in his treatment of Russia and the mongrelized Near East and the Balkans. His last chapter, dealing generally with the "New Realism of Science", is a truly inspiring, sound presentation of the growing belief that it has now become the first business of scientific, rational thought to devote itself to what Professor Thomson has aptly called "the control of life". One may disagree with some of Dr. Stoddard's claims without quarreling with his general position.

There are few collections of essays which offer such an excellent compromise between the struggling forces of students and professors of English literature as does "Forum Papers, First Series" (Duffield). It is certain that the style, the matter, and the brevity of the essays selected will subtly and decidedly gain the interest of the freshman at college; and few contemporary professors would spurn

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a book whose table of contents hold such names as those of Charles W. Eliot, William Lyon Phelps, and Brander Matthews. The collection is pleasing outside of its value as a text for reading in conjunction with other class work. It is a charming volume to anyone who likes the human, personal, fireside manner that a good essay always brings with itself. While the college freshman will be delighted with Price Collier's treatment of the athlete of Æneas's time and of his own, so will the general reader; for to a large body of persons the subject matter is of keen interest, and the manner of presenting it is as human as the matter. Then one cannot resist enjoying the few minutes in which Henry Irving admits his preferences in dramatic rôles; nor can one find a more exciting bit of writing, in the calm realm of the essay, than the work of George Santayana when he sits down to pass a few arguments across the table with America's young radicals. The whole series is a delightful one.

"Thomas Alva Edison" by Francis Arthur Jones (Crowell) is a straightforward, entertaining, and pleasantly human biography of one of the outstanding Americans of our day. The author presents Edison not merely as a genius of wheels and levers and electric dynamos, but as a human being with oddities of character and idiosyncrasies like all other men; and, particularly in the opening chapters, wherein we follow the future inventor's rise from an indigent boyhood, Mr. Jones makes his hero appealingly real. The abundant anecdotes of Edison's career serve to add greatly to the interest of the book, and the descriptions of the various inventions are not so technical but that the lay reader may follow them with ease. All in all, the book achieves something of the fascination of a good narrative without forfeiting thoroughness or adequacy of treatment.

If the most attractive edition of Richard Jefferies's "The Story of My Heart" (Dutton) lures a few persons away from the tiring pursuit of unnumbered contemporaries, the autobiography's new dress is justified. Few, if any, of the current books so use the beauty of poetry in a prose effort. The book is too old to require a review, but for those who have forgotten it, and for those who have hurried by, one quotation may call attention to its quality:

> My heart was dusty, parched for want of the rain of deep-feeling; my mind arid and dry, for there is a dust which settles on the heart as well as that which falls on a ledge.

"Dude-wrangler" is a word that means to most easterners no more than the shadowy figure of a special kind of cowboy with vague and perhaps only fictitious accomplishments. But, as we discover by reading Struthers Burt's "The Diary of a Dude-Wrangler" (Scribner), the wrangling of dudes is really a definite business, and some might go so far as to call it a profession. As a young university instructor, the author felt the tonic call of the west in his blood and came to Wyoming to help run a dude ranch — an establishment which boards and entertains eastern guests during the "dude season". Throughout his apprenticeship to the business, he explored the heart of the Teton country, met the old timers, and generally soaked himself in the atmosphere that was to surround his own subsequent successful venture in this particular kind of ranching. And in the actual administration of his own dude outfit, he had numerous

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eerie adventures with men and animals, as well as at the hands of the potent natural phenomena of this amazing and sometimes awe inspiring country. The narrative of his experiences is packed with accurate detail of the life of a great western ranch, yet it never becomes heavily informative. Because he is first of all a novelist and story teller, Struthers Burt brings to the writing of his rambling account a capacity for delicate satire and the pervading sanity that one finds in men who live a life of action balanced by contemplation. "The remembrance of beauty, of beauty of a thing, or of personal relationships, or of a country, has always seemed to me perhaps the chief end of life; at least, the only end that obviously justifies life." This is the novelist, not the dude-wrangler, speaking, but we have a distinct feeling that such satisfying philosophy must flourish well in the shadow of majestic Rockies.

"Seconds Out" by Fred Dartnell (Brentano) is an addition to the little flood of recent books dealing with aspects of the prize ring, which was once almost exclusively a British institution but which is now conspicuous in the life of many lands. As is the case with most of these books written by Englishmen, "Seconds Out" has throughout the flavor of a fine fair play, of insistence upon the spirit of the sport rather than the physical and commercial victory. But like most of the Englishmen writing, Mr. Dartnell is foggy when it is a matter of the ring history of his own land. For example, with a flourish he says: "John Gully, once England's heavyweight champion at the beginning of the nineteenth century, became the Speaker of the House of Commons." Gully was never either champion of England or Speaker of the House of Commons.

Woman — modern woman — has been called emancipated; but just how many of the ancient shackles has she cast away? By how many of the old beliefs, the old conventions, and the old superstitions, is she still held chained? In "Women and Leisure" (Dutton) Dr. Lorine Pruette propounds a revolutionary and rather startling theory. She holds that the dogma of the child — the belief that it is to the child and the future of the race that we owe our first thoughts — is responsible for much of the present social waste. Women are being held to part time jobs in the home, or are being released half heartedly for spasmodic flights in the direction of their secret ambitions. Dr. Pruette calls this instinct toward race preservation not patriotism, but something like racial cowardice. Nothing — no great good to the community — has ever come about without jeopardy of life; and therefore if it becomes necessary to jeopardize the life of the human race itself in order that a sane balance of effort and opportunity may be struck and a rich harvest reaped therefrom, why, she says, the danger cannot but be worth facing. There are many who will agree with Dr. Pruette; there are many — perhaps the majority — who will disagree; but both classes will find her book interesting and elevating reading.

Translation of Pierre Loti's "Pêcheur d'Islande" (The Iceland Fisherman) occurred many years ago. But those who have sought with disappointment for its sombre beauty in another edition will get it in the translation of W. P. Baines, brought out in the Loti uniform format by Stokes. In this new volume, one finds the translator ac-

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complishing this rendition of Yann's death:

> One night in August, in the waters of sombre Iceland, amid a great fury of sound, his wedding with the sea had been celebrated. With the sea which formerly had also been his nurse; she it was who had rocked him, who had reared him tall and strong — and in the end she had taken him, in the glory of his manhood, for her own. Dark clouds moved overhead, shifting, tormented curtains, spread to conceal the nuptial feast, and the bride roared with a mighty horrible voice to drown his cries. He, mindful of Gaud, his wife of the flesh, had resisted, in a gigantic struggle, this wife of the tomb. Until the moment came when he surrendered, his arms open to receive her, with a great cry like the dying roar of a bull, his mouth already filled with water; his arms open, outspread and rigid forever.

As that passage is infinitely better done than in the earlier translations, so is the entire book.

That Napoleon Bonaparte was less of an author and more of a political philosopher than one might imagine, becomes very evident from his book of memoirs just published in an English translation by Willard Parker under the title of "The Manuscript of St. Helena" (Appleton). The book is crudely, tersely written with no gossip, personality, or atmosphere in it. It is the defeated conqueror's apologia, a sort of rehearsal of what in a few years more he might have to plead before the judgment seat. And this is his defense: The Revolution in France had to be maintained, and could be so maintained only by an efficient government; his Empire was in effect "a vast Democracy led by a Dictatorship" for practical reasons only. That Revolutionary ideals might be established firmly, he himself was the indispensable man of destiny, being "the only one whom appearances have never deceived" . . . "a man with a character stronger than all the armies". His cause — organized Democracy — was lost, he declares, solely through the greater material resources and numbers of his enemies, and he insists that "a man to whom a whole people devoted itself could not have been so destitute of merit as the contemporaries pretended".

In "Scientific Research and Human Welfare" (Macmillan) President Franklin S. Harris of Brigham Young University describes the increase in human welfare that has resulted from the application to communication, transportation, agriculture, disease, and so on of principles of pure science — principles discovered and developed not for the sake of such practical applications (which were not foreseen) but to satisfy a disinterested curiosity or artistic bent. Dr. Harris realizes apparently that the so called practical man has no respect for scientific research if it has no immediate application; but by pointing out the truism that the discovery of a principle must precede its application he evidently hopes to induce the practical man to support even disinterested research; it is with a plea of this sort that the book ends.

"Critical Studies of the Works of Charles Dickens" (Greenberg) should have a double interest for followers of English literature. It is an incisive and unusually appreciative series of critical essays on an important figure in English letters, and at the same time a significant autobiographical jotting by the spirit of George Gissing. The reflection of Gissing's personality is as illuminating as the light thrown upon the values of Dickens. It is something of a rare find to come upon critical essays which are full of charm and entertainment, above their value as criticisms. This group furnishes

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just such a discovery. Gissing somehow captures us with his almost boyish admiration for Dickens. And all the while, magnanimous critic that he is, he is showing us frankly the worst faults of his admired author. Leading us, by his easy familiarity with the works, into the very London of Dickens, he shows us as full a picture of the writer's work as we are likely to get through anything but the reading of the matter itself. Throughout the essays we find not only valuable comments on the writing but also sketches of a very much alive Dickens in London and even in his brief visits to America. And with these pictures come insights into the desires, the prejudices, the tastes of George Gissing. It has been a long time since we have found two such characters so delightfully brought together. Anyone interested in either Dickens or Gissing will be happy in opening this collection.

"The New Larned History" (C. A. Nichols) is now complete in twelve volumes, the latest of which contain articles on the recent history of the United States and Europe. These leave much to be desired, for, possibly in the effort to conserve space, dissenting opinion — that of the National Civil Liberties Union on the Palmer raids and alien deportations, for example, or that of Professors Fay and Barnes on German responsibility for the war — is omitted, with the result that the articles are superficial, biased, and, insofar as they are incomplete, inaccurate. It seems that the available space has not been used intelligently. Two biased opinions do not necessarily yield one that is impartial; they are more apt to produce confusion unless they are dovetailed. Thus the official German denial is no effective answer to the report of the Peace Conference committee declaring the war to have been premeditated and provoked by Germany; far more conclusive is the judgment of Professors Fay and Barnes that such a position is untenable. Yet while pages are given to the mouthings of Bernhardi, Treitschke, and other militarists as tactless and uninfluential as our own, this judgment of Professors Fay and Barnes is not given, though curiously enough the very articles in which it appears are quoted from. Sometimes even one of the two biased opinions is omitted, as when the Bryce Report on Belgian atrocities is reproduced without critical comment other than a casual allusion tucked away in a comparatively obscure paragraph on Armenian massacres: "The Bryce reports have been proved to be without tangible evidence, and to have been based entirely on hearsay."

The development of advertising service during the past twenty five years has produced great changes in American business life, but nowhere greater than in the styles of type used for display purposes. Douglas C. McMurtrie's little volume on "American Type Design in the Twentieth Century" (Ballou) briefly sketches the source of type faces in use in American printeries from the time of the earlier presses. The impetus given to printing by the efforts of William Morris, the Doves Press, and others in the Nineties directed American attention to the need of a housecleaning in type cases; and it is to this development that Mr. McMurtrie limits his brief but excellent treatise. He frankly approaches the subject from the practical side, showing how the great type founding and machine composition companies of the United

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States, with the support of the growing group of young designers, have equipped the printers of the country with many faces of great beauty and practical use. Yet as Frederic W. Goudy, in his excellent but theoretical introduction, points out: "Letters are not shapes made to display the skill of the designer, they are forms fashioned solely to help the reader." The point of Mr. McMurtrie's little book is that the American type designers of the twentieth century are creators of type for display and publicity, not for leisurely reading. The old masters of design left a legacy of fonts that will probably remain undisturbed as long as the present alphabet is in use.

For some time the American public has looked upon Count Boni de Castellane — now Marquis — as a ludicrous figure. His "How I Discovered America" (Knopf) can do little to better his reputation. When he pronounces himself to be the best investment the Gould family ever made, one cannot take him too seriously. It is questionable if his idiosyncrasies would have attracted even a mild interest had it not been for his marriage to Anna Gould, for how else would he have paid for their display? And if he calls his behavior an investment — well, one just can't take it seriously. This is an insincere and poorly written autobiography, entertaining only in the caricature unconsciously drawn.

It is interesting, and sometimes amusing, to see with what new approach the anthologist will make an addition to the number of compilations. Recent publishers' lists have contained two such additions, a collection of English verse by John Drinkwater and one of American lyrics by Stanton A. Coblentz. Mr. Coblentz's reason — positively not an apology — for his offering is that American poetry is in need of a compiler who will be sternly discriminatory rather than cosmopolitan and liberal in his selections. John Drinkwater, while holding vaguely similar purposes in view, has the vast field of the poetry of Great Britain to work in. His declared intention is to provide a selection of the choicest fruits of the English field to present to the reader who has but recently become a poetry addict. It is therefore a collection that presents few verses unfamiliar to the reader who is an old wanderer in the realms of gold. Mr. Coblentz is to be applauded in his definite stand against the hog butchers of verse. His "Modern American Lyrics" (Minton, Balch) is a valiant thrust into the vitals of the fakirs. The verse in it is worth all the inanities done in chopping-block rhythm during the last ten years. The greatest possible fault of the book is that it emphasizes one or two single poets whose work, while pleasing, is not at all worthy of emphasis. Other than this, Mr. Coblentz's selections exhibit a scientific discretion. John Drinkwater's "Anthology of English Verse" (Houghton Mifflin) shows the profound knowledge and unerring judgment of its compiler in his field. The selections are, without exception, bits of immortality. There are, however, two elements which limit the value of the collection: The fact that the selections of the early verse are in the language of the originals will hold many of its intended readers (persons having no great knowledge of poetry) from a thorough reading of it; and the fact that Palgrave's "Golden Treasury" covers a field not too profound for these unfamiliar readers would seem to make the Drinkwater collection unnecessary.

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# THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

*Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America*

*The Monthly Score for November is full of news.*

*Imprimis: The Score has been enlarged — twelve titles graded and reported in each classification, instead of the ten we have been running for the past couple of years.*

*Secundus: H. G. Wells is no longer in our midst. His "Outline" leaped into the lists an even four years ago.*

*Tertius: Observe the asterisks denoting new titles. Note the certainty and ease with which Joe Lincoln starts from scratch and lines up with the leaders. Consider the imminent popularity of Michael Arlen. And, please, join this reporter in marveling reverently at the durability of Mark Twain. Has any other author ever published two works fifty five years apart and found such an instant public response as met "Innocents Abroad" in 1869 and now the "Autobiography"? — F. P. S.*

## FICTION

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The Little French Girl | *Anne Douglas Sedgwick* | HOUGHTON |
| 2. | So Big | *Edna Ferber* | DOUBLEDAY |
| 3. | Rugged Water * | *Joseph C. Lincoln* | APPLETON |
| 4. | Rose of the World | *Kathleen Norris* | DOUBLEDAY |
| 5. | The Home-Maker | *Dorothy Canfield* | HARCOURT |
| 6. | Peacock Feathers | *Temple Bailey* | PENN |
| 7. | The Plastic Age | *Percy Marks* | CENTURY |
| 8. | The Green Hat * | *Michael Arlen* | DORAN |
| 9. | A Gentleman of Courage | *James Oliver Curwood* | COSMOPOLITAN |
| 10. | The White Monkey * | *John Galsworthy* | SCRIBNER |
| 11. | Nina * | *Susan Ertz* | APPLETON |
| 12. | The Tattooed Countess * | *Carl Van Vechten* | KNOPF |

## GENERAL

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | My Garden of Memory | *Kate Douglas Wiggin* | HOUGHTON |
| 2. | Ariel: The Life of Shelley | *André Maurois* | APPLETON |
| 3. | Saint Joan | *George Bernard Shaw* | BRENTANO |
| 4. | Mark Twain's Autobiography * | *Samuel L. Clemens* | HARPER |
| 5. | The Dance of Life | *Havelock Ellis* | HOUGHTON |
| 6. | Life and Letters of Walter H. Page | *Burton J. Hendrick* | DOUBLEDAY |
| 7. | From Immigrant to Inventor | *Michael Pupin* | SCRIBNER |
| 8. | Etiquette | *Emily Post* | FUNK & WAGNALLS |
| 9. | Galápagos: World's End | *William Beebe* | PUTNAM |
| 10. | The New Decalogue of Science | *Albert Edward Wiggam* | BOBBS |
| 11. | Life of Christ | *Giovanni Papini* | HARCOURT |
| 12. | The Mind in the Making | *James Harvey Robinson* | HARPER |

* This title has not before appeared in the Monthly Score.



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# FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

## *"There's a Lot That's Queer in This World"*

THAT man has not yet lived who, having reached the age of maturity and having at least attempted to accomplish a little something, has not been impressed with the singular oddity of the world in which we live. Indeed it is not God's ways but the world's ways that are past finding out. Shakespeare committed himself on this point, directly or indirectly, in everything he wrote. At the close of Friedrich Hebbel's powerful drama, "Maria Magdalena", Master Anton exclaims, "I really don't understand the world any more!" German critics have made quite a little out of this confession; but their exegeses have been rather idle, for that is the status of every man. And Lieutenant Lagerlöf, the beloved and picturesque father of that good woman with whose autobiography we lead off this month, is made to use the quotation that serves as our caption. Let us note a few of the strange things about men as these are brought to light in the six volumes before us.

As to Selma Lagerlöf's "Mårbacka", it proves that poets are not merely born but also reared. A girl brought up in the surroundings which Selma Lagerlöf (it is not without interest that her family name means "laurel leaf") depicts might have become one of those working girls whom Heaven protects. She grew instead into the author and creator of such inspired epics as "Jerusalem", "Invisible Links", and "Gösta Berling". Born as she was — and no one can account for her birth — we see where her genius came from: it came from her rearing.

Let a single illustration suffice, even though the one selected may not bring out, as should be brought out, the sustained and non-vaporizable charms of this life of an unselfishly endowed woman by herself. There is a chapter entitled "The New Barn". Father decided that the old cow house, though covered with charitable vines, was an eyesore to Mårbacka. He decided to build a new one; his father-in-law furnished the money. He chose however a bad site: one wall gave way, and to continue in that location would cost so much that the original creditor would have to be approached for additional funds or a mortgage would have to be resorted to. What was to be done? Everybody advised against the mortgage except the mother. She said: "Let's take out one." The barn was finished and a beautiful building it was. I really know of nothing in such literature as I have read in the last quarter of a century that is simpler and lovelier than this barn business, unimportant though it may be in the integrity of the autobiography. And having read it, I have a better understanding of the difficulty Selma Lagerlöf had in building up her stories about "Nils" and "The Girl from the Marsh Croft".

One of the first things that impresses the reader on glancing over the 433 pages of "Thomas the Lambkin" is the number of words spelled with capitals and printed in italics. These are not winged words but the



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names of ships which Thomas Trublet by name, Sieur Thomas l'Agnelet (that is, "The Lambkin") by nickname, engaged in gory battle on the high seas. There are hundreds of them and Thomas is victor always. On his own account, he was not a pirate but a Corsair and a gentleman of fortune. He was really serving, he felt, the interests of his seventeenth century French king, until that particular Louis issued an order that filibustering was to be discontinued. It was impossible for Thomas to adapt himself immediately to the new moral code. He fought one fight too many, was taken prisoner and condemned to die, along with the beautiful Spanish Juana whom he had in the meantime captured and made interminable love to, on the yard arm of his own flagship. The noose having been neatly adjusted, however, Thomas voluntarily leaped to death on learning that Juana had not been true to him. It is rather difficult for me to see how a more captivating sea yarn could be spun, and the last few pages bring about a situation that is as unexpected as would be an epic poem of twenty cantos in *terze rime*, denouncing common sense, and written by Calvin Coolidge.

The really surprising feature of the novel, however, lies rather in the fact that it is receiving a cordial welcome in this country which has never been a seafaring nation, which is, truth to tell, basically pacifist, which has never been able to build up a merchant marine of its own, and which can hardly be called a law abiding nation when blanket statutes interfere with the individual's habits. The fact is, when we read fiction we want fiction.

In "The Fox's Paw" we have a Spanish "Plastic Age" with such modifications as would be logically imposed by the change of venue from, say, Providence, Rhode Island, to anywhere in the Iberian peninsula. That seems a long way off, but the author quotes Longfellow and Whittier and is familiar with the better brands of English sauces, all of which tends to make us feel at home. Nor need we be particularly shocked by the irregular antics of the hero, Albert, who, having spent six years in a Jesuit college, has got his A.B. and is now ready to have the world teach him the rest of the alphabet, after which he will be prepared, possibly, to read the signs of the times. Albert is a lusher, an egoist, and a potential home wrecker. Yet no one can doubt his agility of imagination nor fail to become interested in him as he bowls over one guileless girl after another and leaves his friends at the end of a blind alley without guide, compass, or wallet. And if the Aunt Anastasia of the novel could be interviewed she would sign a sworn statement to the effect that everything in this world is queer.

As to the title, there is much in common between Pérez de Ayala and Goethe in the matter of interpreting temporary misfortune. In a delightful little poem buried in one of his utterly obscure dramas, "Jery und Bätely", Goethe says: Have you lost some wealth? Well, you will simply have to go to work and make up for it. Have you lost your reputation? Well, just go out and accomplish something worthwhile, and people will regard you as a misjudged hero. Have you lost your courage? Then it were better that a millstone were tied about your neck and you were cast into the deepest of waters. Albert may impersonate that doctrine some time, for you can never tell what a man will do who is as interestingly trifling as he is.

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Cleopatra was the queerest woman that ever lived; and Claude Ferval has written a life of her that is stronger than fiction and stranger then truth — and High Heaven knows that the truth of this world is strange enough. She conquered —according to her French admirer — women whom men could not conquer and men whom armies could not restrain. Pretty is that pretty does, found no championship with her: her acts were ugly. She was beautiful and retained her charms despite the fact that she was the one who was most passionately convinced that she had charms, which is contrary to ethics as taught in academe, and despite her various children born out of wedlock, the birth of each one of whom seemed to add five years to her life. And when she came to die — to die rather than not be the leading lady — she opened a fig, placed a few drops of the right kind on the inside, swallowed the tidbit, and went to her reward, her body showing not even a vaccination mark. That story about the asp is so vulgar!

I believe that there is a Jewish problem that is serious, just as I believe that there is an Irish problem and a French problem and a German problem and a Swedish problem and an American problem; for people, regardless of nationality, are queer. And I have never seen this "problem", in the case of the Jewish people, set forth with such irresistible clarity as the Tharaud brothers display in their volume entitled "When Israel Is King", a volume that does for Hungary what Belloc and Chesterton combined could hardly do for any other country. I like fiction, the two novels included in this list gave me hours of informative entertainment; but they did not interest me as did this book on Hungary, which begins with the analysis of an etching of Bismarck that might be entitled "How to Look at a Picture of a German", and closes with a chapter headed "The Staff of Ahasuerus". About to leave Budapest, the Tharaud boys inspected a huge number of windowless passenger coaches standing on a well grassed siding in the railway yards of that city and inhabited by hosts of Jews to whom the government of Hungary was playing the rôle of a Magyar Ku Klux Klan: the railroaders had been chosen to regard themselves as a segregated people indigenous to some place beyond the borders.

The book shows why this stand was taken. Its analyzed inventory of faults and mistakes on the part of both Jew and Gentile is matchless. It is human nature in the process of vivisection. How could even two men in collaboration give more striking character sketches than these Frenchmen have given of Count Michel Karolyi, president of the Provisional Republic — the man whose false palate was made of untarnished silver — and Bela Kun, notorious all around, the man whose real name was Cohen? That the book is a best seller in France is, however, not queer.

Elie Faure wrote his "Napoleon" because of a statement made by his hero to the effect that he loved power but he loved it as an artist; that he killed men but they were the enemies of France; that he had a brain but he also had a heart. And he concludes, or contends, that Napoleon was a violator of the law who tracked crime to its source and crushed it; that he was an assassin who redressed wrongs; that he would have deserved to be hanged as an ordinary person though in his supreme position he was un-

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sullied. A greater book of its kind could not be written on Napoleon; and since it is admirably translated it is to be urged on anyone who can read English and who wishes to get a slight inkling as to why there is so much in this world that is queer.

After all, we are all individualists, or there must be "dividualists", and there is no such word. If we had the thing we should have the terminology. How could the Lagerlöfs help but be impressed with the queerness of things when little Selma was romping about and upsetting, not merely the furniture, but the established canons of human conduct? How could anyone, judge or jurist, presume to say that Thomas the Lambkin would have done much better to have taken a position in a shipyard as a riveter? When de Ayala's Albert offends Meg or slaps Teresuca or kills Fina, indirectly, he is merely living his own life just as Cleopatra and Napoleon and Count Tisza lived theirs until other individuals choked them, or choked them off. What in short is a normal life, and who is to determine the norm?

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

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Mårbacka. By Selma Lagerlöf. Translated from the Swedish by Velma Swanston Howard. Doubleday, Page and Co.

Thomas the Lambkin. By Claude Farrère. Authorized translation from the French by Leo Ongley. E. P. Dutton and Co.

The Fox's Paw (*La Pata de la Raposa*), A Novel of Spanish Life. By Ramon Pérez de Ayala. Translated into English by Thomas Walsh. E. P. Dutton and Co.

The Life and Death of Cleopatra. By Claude Ferval. Translated by M. E. Poindexter. Doubleday, Page and Co.

When Israel Is King. By Jerome and Jean Tharaud. Translated from the 64th French edition by The Hon. Lady Whitehead. Robert M. McBride and Co.

Napoleon. By Elie Faure. Translated from the French by Jeffery E. Jeffery. Alfred A. Knopf.

*Notes from France*

THE political fight which centred around the last French elections gave J. Kessel and G. Suarez the opportunity for a particularly interesting inquiry among the leaders of the various parties on the eve of the great vote of May 11. After the defeat of M. Poincaré's "Bloc National" and the political triumph of the parties of the Left, these two authors went to interview the defeated party. A new book, "Au Camp des Vaincus", gives us the reactions of the principal Conservative and Nationalist leaders under the new Liberal government.

A conclusion to be drawn from "Le Onze Mai" is that French politicians, with the exception of one or two, are very much like politicians in other countries, who delude themselves to an incredible extent about their chances of success. They underestimate the opponent, they ignore the real condition of public feeling about them. Economic and financial advisers and "experts" do not escape the rule, as soon as politics begins to warp their outlook.

Since the political game will go on, unabated, between Right and Left, it may be useful to anyone who wants to understand the French parties and their respective positions to read these two books, which are conscientiously written and up to date.

Those who are curious concerning everything pertaining to modern French literature should turn to the "Almanach des Lettres Françaises" by Léon Treich, a resourceful book, full of data, anecdotes, and particulars.

We intend to give next month a survey of the most significant novels by young authors, portraying the modern young man from a French angle. On the other hand, shall we

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see a sign of a rebirth of the historical novel in Jean Schlumberger's latest book, "Le Lion Devenu Vieux"? It is a masterly portrait of the famous Paul de Gondi, Cardinal de Retz and "coadjutor" of the Archbishop of Paris during the early years of Louis XIV's reign. Yet it is fiction, written in a style tactfully reminiscent of the *Mémoires* composed during the *Grand Siècle*, with no annoying archaism about it. It is history, it is fiction, but it is above all a psychological novel, thus upsetting the exclusive demarcations between genres which have bothered us so much. What if this were the signal for historical books that should also be works of art and valuable psychological documents?

Not belonging to fiction, but of capital importance for the psychology of religious experience and the relation between art and religion, is the important work by Jean Baruzi on Jean de la Croix — Juan de la Cruz — the great Spanish mystic of the time of Saint Theresa of Avila (Alcan). Juan de la Cruz wrote some of the most beautiful poems that exist in any language. The patient and thorough investigations of Jean Baruzi have brought to light much that was unknown, and given the most illuminating interpretations of Juan's personality and aspirations. This book should take place next to Ruysbrock the Admirable, Maeterlinck's "Essays on Novalis", and the lyrical works by the religious poets of Asia.

PIERRE DE LANUX

*The German Fancy Ranges*

GERHART HAUPTMANN'S new novel, which has been eight years under way, "Die Insel der Grossen Mütter" (The Island of the Great Mothers), is described by himself as a Utopian fantasy. Its subject is the matriarchate founded by shipwrecked European women and children on an idyllic South Sea island. Presently it becomes necessary to invent a myth to account for the mysterious transformation of the young women into young mothers. It is this problem of the origin and development of a myth which has fascinated Hauptmann. But his subject is fraught not only with intentional but also with unintentional humor. The one moment of deep poetic feeling, according to one reviewer, is the quiet stealing away of Phaon, the only man in the community, to Europe, leaving his vast family to solve its new problems. Even the quality of the language is demurred against. Hauptmann is old, has written very much, and is far too popular with the faithful of his following.

He is also writing a travel book and collecting his material in company with a talented artist, in Egypt. A Dresden publishing firm has arranged the expedition and hopes to evoke a masterpiece similar to Hauptmann's famous "Griechischer Frühling" (Greek Spring).

Friedrich Gundolf, the famous critic, has written a remarkable book entitled "Cæsar". It is a kind of history of the world, revolving about the Cæsarean idea, treating of Cæsar as a figure of myth, as a magic name and as an historical personality, and tracing the influence of Cæsar by way of Dante and Napoleon to Nietzsche. "Cæsar, the History of His Fame" is the full title of the intriguing book.

Georg Brandes's monumental "Main Currents of Nineteenth Century Literature" has just appeared in its new German edition, published by the Erich Reiss Verlag, Berlin. This great,

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deep, and fascinating work is now in its final form, revised by the venerable author himself and splendidly rendered by Ernst Richard Eckert.

The Heidelberg scientist Dr. Hans Peinzborn, famous for a book on the art of the insane, in which he drew devastating comparisons between the lunatic's conception of pictorial art and the Futurist, is now about to publish a work, equally interesting from a pathological point of view, on the art of the prisoner. It is the first time that this particular territory has been thoroughly investigated and psychologically illuminated. The book will have many illustrations.

Edgar Allan Poe's "Love Letters to Helen" are about to appear for the first time in German, in a translation by Dr. Georg Geyart. The unpublished portions of Oscar Wilde's "De Profundis" have been acquired for German rights by S. Fischer, Berlin, who will publish them for the first time in any language under the title "Episkopa".

It is a piquant literary coincidence or intention that the two most important books appearing in honor of Nietzsche's eightieth birthday, or of what would have been the eightieth birthday if this strange winged genius had lived, are by the two women who stood nearest to him and who stand, because and in spite of this, furthest from one another. Frau Dr. Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche, his devoted sister, foundress and head of the Nietzsche Archiv in Weimar, has edited under the title "Der Werdende Nietzsche" (Nietzsche in Growth) some autobiographical documents of Nietzsche's youth, diaries and so on, covering the years 1844–1869. This starry youth's fatherhood of the later Nietzsche is very apparent in these absorbing papers. The book is to contain five unknown youthful portraits of the philosopher. The second book, by Lou Andreas-Salome, Nietzsche's erstwhile female disciple, is entitled "Friedrich Nietzsche in His Works".

Brehm's "Tierleben" is one of the few German books which almost everyone has heard of; yet in a mistaken effort to bring Professor Brehm's natural history theories in harmony with the latest research, his monumental work has been added to, altered, edited, until it is scarcely recognizable. An attempt is now being made to free this unique natural history genius from his superlearned trappings, and various new editions of his original books are appearing. Another natural historian of personal genius, Theodor Zell, recently dead, left behind him one of his fascinatingly written books with the title "Reason in Animals, Concerning Man's Teachers". The title explains the standpoint. Zell was always setting up original theories and fighting for them against the hidebound — hence the very titles of his later books have a note of challenge. Wilhelm Bölsche, a naturalist with a poet's soul, and perhaps the most gifted of Haeckel's disciples, has just published a new work whose title alone suffices to recommend its enthralling contents. It is called "Tierseele und Menschenseele" (The Animal Soul and the Human Soul) and published by the Gesellschaft der Naturfreunde, Francksche Buchhandlung, Stuttgart.

Theodor Däubler, mystic lyric poet of rich and darkling idiom, is living in Greece, whence he sends home book upon book of prose and verse. The latest are a volume of "Pæans and Dithyrambs" and one of "Attic Sonnets". Before this there was a singular volume on Sparta, dealing with its ancient cults, literary-philosophical research, and a flamingly lyrical prose

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account, written in a peculiar singing rhythm, of the monks of Mount Athos. Signs of much learning, much research, much thought, glow through these books; they are full of stylistic idiosyncrasy and of ideas sometimes daring, sometimes only poetic. But they make difficult reading, for Däubler's inexorable rule of rhythm crushes all clarity. All the poet's books are published by the Insel Verlag, Leipzig.

An art book which is an invaluable reference book and unique in its scope is "Wunder der Kunst" by Eugen Georg, Verlag Gebr. Rennert, Berlin. In 400 pages, with 126 illustrations, the author has attempted to give a universal survey, as it were, a world history of art development, not of art as an affair of academies and pyramidal genius, but the great broad stream of art as reflected in the souls of peoples. Thanks to the author's graphic style, and gift of vivid presentation of his comprehensive knowledge, he has succeeded well in his ambitious attempt.

A book about an art which is at once the expression of a theory and a foundation for a philosophy of the dance and the cultivation of the body to individual personality and the realization of the individual rhythm, is Fritz Giese's "Körperseele" (Delphin Verlag, Munich). It is much more than a book for dancers and those interested in the dance. The soul of one's body, to translate the title, is a matter of moment to everyone — grace, health, and the distinction of individuality are largely a matter of the recognition and fostering of that elusive soul.

An interesting travel book with a good title is issued by Brockhaus, Leipzig — "Im Reiche der Medea". Alfred Nawrath is the wanderer in the land of Medea, and his adventures and experiences make good reading. We do not always remember that the mysterious land of Colchis is none other than the region of the Caucasus, wild, darkly mountainous, fruitful, and — to the ordinary traveler — still an unknown and mysterious land. Herr Nawrath was the first European since 1914 to cross the desolate passes and report what the world war has brought to the mountain peoples.

Ernst Toller has finished a new book of lyrics which bears the title "Prisoners". Since the young dramatist was released from prison a month ago — after serving his full time — he has been traveling about the country attending performances of "Die Wandlung", "Masse Mensch", or "Der Deutsche Hinkemann" for the first time, and receiving ovations due in part to reverence for the genius of the plays and in part to sympathy for the unlucky young playwright.

Two new volumes in two Brockhaus series, "Reise und Abenteuer" and "Alte Reise und Abenteuer", deserve notice. Sir Douglas Mawson's enthralling account of his South Pole expedition appears in the first series under the German title "Leben und Tod am Südpol". For the series of "Oldtime Adventures", Dr. Hans Damm has edited "Francis Drake as Freebooter in Spanish America". Dr. Damm's work has consisted principally in collating and selecting contemporary accounts of Drake's great voyages by members of his crew. Excellently chosen old illustrations and maps complete the book.

That extraordinarily comprehensive and thorough history of the world's literature, "Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft", which is issued by Professor Walzel of Bonn, has progressed already to Nos. 26, 27, 28. These three numbers contain a con-

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tinuation of Klemperer's "Romanische Literatur", of Heiss's "Roman Literature of the 19–20th Century", and of a paper "Gehalt und Gestalt" by Professor Walzel himself, in which thought and expression combine to convey a brilliant and comprehensive survey of the purpose and inner content of literature as well as its outward form.

A yearbook which would make a wonderful gift for any young scientific man who understands German is "Tage der Technik für 1925", a tear-off calendar decorated in a decidedly fascinating way with three hundred woodcuts and other illustrations, and constituting a very remarkable record of scientific advance and discovery. The most striking fact that impresses itself upon a cursory glance is the comparatively recent nature of all real scientific advance. All the inventions to which we owe the common comforts of everyday life seem to have originated in the nineteenth century. Oldenbourg of Munich publish the calendar, which has been compiled by Herr Feldhaus.

The Hofbuchdruckerei — which, to reduce it to a normal number of syllables, only means the Court or Royal Press — in Weimar has celebrated an unusual festival — that of its tercentenary. The press had from its beginnings the advantage of Royal patronage. It has done some famous work in its day, especially when it was under the direction of Hermann Böhlau, the father of the popular German novelist, Helene Böhlau. He took command in 1853 and printed the "Monumenta Germaniæ Historica", the complete critical edition of Luther's works, and a wonderful "Double Edition" of Goethe, specially commissioned by the Grandduchess Sophie. In 1876 Queen Victoria of England ordered from this press the printing of the huge catalogue of the Windsor Castle collection of Raphaels. Later the press devoted itself especially to juristic works. Last year the old Royal Press was turned into a limited liability company. Less romantic — but just as good for knowledge and science.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

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# THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE ESSAY CONTEST

THE BOOKMAN Children's Book Week essay prize is this year awarded to Tom Reynolds, age twelve, of Upper Montclair, New Jersey, whose composition on the assigned "My Book Friends at the Movies" is reprinted here. The editors of THE BOOKMAN feel that the present batch of essays represents more intelligence and versatility on the part of the children than have been displayed in our previous contests. It is always a surprise to find young people today reading practically the same books that their parents did years ago. Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn are book characters mentioned in practically every paper. Jo and Amy of "Little Women" are not far behind. Another interesting point about these essays is the type of motion picture chosen by the children for their book friends. The films most frequently mentioned are "The Covered Wagon" and the various pictures of Douglas Fairbanks and Harold Lloyd. Few movies of the more sensational type find place in these stories, although Katherine McCulloch of Haverford, Pennsylvania, writes:

> Another friend I should love to take would be William Penn. Down from his precarious position on Philadelphia City Hall Tower. Can't you see his amazement at the city, the high buildings, the automobiles, and the street cars? The subway and elevated would hold unknown terrors for him lest the elevated fall upon the street or the street fall through upon the subway. His surprise at an aeroplane would be amusing. I don't know what I should take him to see — "Feet of Clay", I think. The movie itself would surprise him, the character of this generation would horrify and the crowds of people coming to see this "idle pastime" would pain him.

One young man says that the ambition of his life is to spend a day with Douglas Fairbanks, because he is such a good athlete and could "teach me some stunts".

The second prize goes to Betty Lewton, age fourteen, of Brookline, Massachusetts, whose essay is also given below. Other prize winners are Frances Wright of Upper Montclair, New Jersey (Frances illustrated her essay and we reproduce in the Gossip Shop her impression of how Will Banion, overcome by the attack of the Indians in "The Covered Wagon", arose and fired a shot into the screen); Lucy Petrone of Suffern, New York; Dorothy Ogle of Catonsville, Maryland; Dennis Simmons of Kokomo, Indiana; Eleanor E. Eggleston of Upper Montclair, New Jersey; Lester Warmbrun of New York City; Betty Riddell of Oakland, California; Anna Tinkel of New York City. Two extra prizes are awarded to Eleanor Plowhead of Caldwell, Idaho, and Larry Cunningham of Upper Montclair, New Jersey. Honorable mention goes to Gladys Prieur of Albany, New York, whose essay was too long to win a prize; and to Violet Raynor of Fredonia, New York, who took only eight characters to her party.

There were over three hundred contestants in all, and the reading of these essays was a real pleasure. It gave a contact with fresh, original minds to which we shall look forward again. If you didn't win a prize this year, try it next time.

Here are the first and second prize winning essays, printed exactly as they were written:



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## MY BOOK FRIENDS AT THE MOVIES

By Tom Reynolds

*Age 12*

ONE rainy afternoon I wandered into the library and took down the "Refugees" in which I met His Majesty Louis XIV. He remarked the afternoon was very unexciting and commanded, "It is my wish that you think of some form of amusement or your head will be severed from your shoulders." I hastened to suggest that we attend a movie, "The Covered Wagon", perhaps and mentioned the possibility of more jollity with about ten other friends along. "Yes, Yes," he cried, becoming excited, "Maria Theresa, King James, Madame de Montespan, King Charles, —

But Your Majesty, would not a few friends from the country make the party merrier?" I broke in. Finally after much persuasion Louis condescended. "Very well, but I do hate to mingle with people of such low birth."

I then suggested the Three Musketeers as protection for His Majesty. To this he readily assented. I mentioned Huck Finn, Tom Sawyer, Robin Hood, Don Quixote, Buffalo Bill, and lastly Kit Carson. After each person came forward Louis heaved a sigh of contempt. In a short time we were ready to depart.

Louis called for his gilded coach and we followed the monarch within. The musketeers rode on the outside with the proud and haughty coachman. The carriage drawn by beautiful white horses rumbled out of the drive onto the dusty road. We were off.

Louis, resplendent in silks and magnificent satins, wearing delicate pink slippers, was bored beyond words. Huck and Tom were awed at the presence of such a wonderful person and sat spell bound. Kit Carson and Buffalo Bill, who were clad in leather, took Louis all in from head to foot with interested looks on their faces. Finally they came to the conclusion that he was a fit ruler of France. Robin Hood joined in with them and nodded approvingly in the direction of the king.

As the coach came to a halt, a footman opened the door and we stepped down onto the walk. Louis glided gracefully forward. We fell in behind him and promenaded into the theatre, down the middle aisle and chose the best box seats. Louis acted as if this were an every day occasion but the other members of the party blushed as the hundreds of people turned their gaze towards them.

After all were settled we started to take interest in the picture. "Say, Bill, that's no way to drop a buffalo, is it? Look at that fellow. He's as awkward as a baby with a popgun," whispered Kit.

Huck and Tom jumped around in their seats shouting and cheering for the "Indjuns," much to the displeasure of the people behind them. Louis sat silent taking snuff at short intervals and continually looking down on the others with disdain.

At the end of the show His Majesty yawned and remarked, "Oh yes, those stage settings could have been better, and yes, the acting would have been remarkable if an expierienced manager had taken it into his hands, while the story was fair but could have been improved upon."

I asked the boys their impression of the movie and they eagerly cried, "Gee, it was swell and them Indjuns and shootin' and ridin', O boy, those fellows were tough old grizzlies all right."

Kit Carson and Bill seemed disgusted with the whole thing. "Why," drawled Bill, "as buffalo hunters those men would make good washwomen. The way those fellows used a gun—it's all a fake, just a fake."

"The story did not have any flashing swords," complained the musketeers in unison. Much to the disgust of the boys the picture was voted, not wonderful, but just fair, by a slight majority.

The boys appealed for ice cream sodas and the rest of us seemed agreeable. Louis declared he would pay for them out of his treasury.

We all sat spell bound while Louis ordered a double ice cream sundae with whipped cream, cut bananas, strawberries, and peaches with chocolate sauce and pieces of oranges on the top. We all, too stunned to speak, nodded for the same when asked for our orders. Tom and Huck ate their strawberries with their fingers while Bill tried to get it all down in one gulp by lifting the dish to his mouth. The result was disastrous. Kit fared no better and soon half of his was on the table and the other half on the floor. Robin Hood, artfully got his down with only the loss of two berries. Louis made silent vows never to mingle with such crude people again and sighed in relief when they finished.

## MY BOOK FRIENDS AT THE MOVIES

By Betty Lewton

*Age 14*

"AT these words Lord James drew his sword and rushed on the villains."

I shut the book and threw it on the table.

"I wonder," I thought despairingly, "how people in books would really act!

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I'm sure they couldn't be very different from us."

As if in answer from the books on the shelves came a list of notables that made me stare in surprise. I beheld Cleopatra, Scrooge, Robin Hood, Don Quixote, Achilles, Oliver Twist, Mowgli, Brunhild, Baron Munchausen, Beatrice, Louis XI.

As they stepped from the books they were about four inches high, but on reaching the ground they grew to life size.

I started to speak but Cleopatra said, "We heard you and have decided to show you what, 'people in books would be like'. Now what shall we do?"

I racked my brains and finally said lamely, "Would you like to see a movie?"

"A movie! What's a movie?" asked Mowgli.

"Why-er it's pictures on a screen that act out a story."

"Oh, a miracle play," said Beatrice. "Father took Hero and me to see the Butchers Guild last Candlemas and passing strange the loons looked, capering about the stage."

"Not exactly," I said, "not many are of a religious nature."

Suddenly Scrooge, startled, spoke up, "The theatre is a crown and a criminal waste. I will not spend my money on the theatre!"

Robin Hood cut in an aside to Beatrice, "I would give a silver candlestick to have the knave with my merry men. I warrant you we would strip him!"

"Ah," she answered laughlingly, "if fear for a crown gives him the ague, thy men would make him bewitched."

We chose the "Covered Wagon," and settled down.

Mowgli was full of questions but was looked on askance as a heathen by Louis. Indeed he suggested putting him in chains, but Achilles whose contempt of Louis was equalled only by his temper, told him in very plain words that he had killed many a Trojan and was not averse to using his sword on a tyrant.

Louis flushed but passed off the matter as a jest and under the tact of Cleopatra peace was restored.

As the fight between the villain and the hero was shown, Don Quixote exclaimed, "They are the leaders but they fight together like common churls. Their knaves won't obey them."

I explained that the men chose them themselves but he was even more scandalized at that idea.

When the hero rescued the girl from the prarie fire, Brunhild exclaimed, "Worthy of a Viking! Thou shalt see Valhalla for that!"

Here Scrooge ventured that it was nothing wonderful. The girl, a silly hussy, would have gotten her deserts. He would not have raised a hand.

This brought Robin Hood and Don Quixote up standing.

"What," cried the blunt woodsman, "wouldst thou leave a maiden in distress? And I had thee in Sherwood Forest thou'd look like a clove-dotted ham! Thou knave, thou'd be bristling with arrows."

"Ah," exclaimed Quixote, "I'd hang thee by the toes as a warning. Thou coward!"

Here Louis broke in, "Come, my friends, our friend's remark was an innocent one, but he is a hard man of sense. I wot not he would do his part. (And by St. Denis, I agree with him)," he added, under his breath.

Oliver Twist and Mowgli were soon talking eagerly. Only stopping at a particularly exciting moment. While tales of Bill Sykes and Fagin and Baloo the bear and the Black Panther were exchanged.

As the Indians attacked the wagon-train Munchausen exclaimed, "Why, that's nothing. At the siege of —."

"Enough, Frenchy," cut in Robin Hood, "I'm in your book and I've had to hear you before."

They quarrelled until the picture ended; talking alternately and very often together.

Everyone expressed satisfaction at the villain's death and the hero's triumph, although Louis remarked to Scrooge that if the villain had had the wit of a loon he would have sent a few good cross-bowmen to kill the fellow and not have tried to do it himself. He was also disgusted when the hero insisted on pulling the villain out of the mud-hole and he quite sympathized with the old scout.

After the movie my friends said goodbye to return to their respective books, I imagine. Sometimes, however, when I look at the pictures in the books where my friends are I think I see a smile on their faces as if they too were thinking of the afternoon we spent together.

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# THE GOSSIP SHOP

WHEN we were talking to Mary Roberts Rinehart the other day, she declared that, inasmuch as the women of the United States are just now giving the best of their thought and experience to the questions of social and cultural expression, what they seriously need is an opportunity for giving nation wide expression to their plans, ideals and ideas. She urged the advisability of making an offer for a series of papers from the members of clubs throughout the country. Developing the idea, THE BOOKMAN offers prizes for papers on the following subjects:

1. A Literary Subject
2. National Affairs (domestic)
3. Education
4. Decorative Art or Business Ideals
5. Religion or Social Welfare or Club Work

A first prize of two hundred dollars will be awarded for the best essay submitted. In addition, one hundred dollars will be paid for the best essay in each of the five classes.

Conditions for entrance are as follows:

All members of men's or women's clubs in the United States may enter this contest.

It is not necessary that the paper submitted shall have been read before the club. Approval by the club president or secretary is all that is necessary.

Manuscripts should not be under 2,000 or more than 3,000 words in length and must be typed clearly on one side of the sheet.

They should be addressed to: Club Contest Editor, THE BOOKMAN, 244 Madison Avenue, New York City, on or before April 1, 1925.

All essays awarded prizes will be printed in THE BOOKMAN at the discretion of the editor.

Copies of rejected papers will not be returned, but after the announcement of prize winners, other contestants have full publication rights of their papers.

Announcement of the judges' decision will be made in the June issue of THE BOOKMAN, published May 22, 1925.

The judges in this contest will be: Mary Roberts Rinehart, chairman; Ida Clyde Clarke, Fannie Hurst, John Erskine, and John Farrar.

Any further information desired will gladly be furnished. THE BOOKMAN hopes to give to its readers through this contest a picture of the current thought and effort along cultural and social channels.

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There is no question that this year's winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature believes in the long novel. Ladislas St. Reymont, a Pole, may be read in English, for the first volume of his four deck novel, "The Peasants", has just been published in translation. Moreover, he is now working on a cycle of nine novels, one of which will deal with Polish peasant life in America. Reymont visited this country in 1919 to gather material. His occupations have been various — he has been store clerk, telegraph operator, actor, rail employee, farm hand, Paulist novice. But he has had time to turn out twenty three published volumes. Apparently an extraordinarily diligent gentleman, for he is only fifty six years of age now. We wonder how cordial he is to publishers and editors. We recently heard a story which pleased us mightily, although we doubt its truth. It pleased us only because it was an illustration of sublime artistic ego. A famous foreign novelist whose fortune in this country was made by the wisdom and diligence of a certain publisher, lives in a distant part of his own



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land. Our publisher journeyed thither to consult him. At the front door a maid reported her master unable to see the visitor. "But", protested the publisher, "are you sure that he understood the name? I am his American publisher. I have come all this way to see him. It is exceedingly important." The message returned was definite: "My master says that he'd rather see anyone in the world but you!" Thus the great author gestures magnificently. Lest there be confusion, the author was not Polish, and the anecdote has little connection with M. Reymont.

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Robert H. Davis has always been one of the livest editors in America. To talk with him over a luncheon table is not always comfortable, in spite of his genial personality, and his habit of whipping a good cigar out of his pocket and into your hand. He is honest, he looks at you with small, peculiarly searching eyes, and he will tell you unpleasant truths. The man who has printed the first stories of most of our well known short story writers, who has a genius for discovering talent, is yet brutal in his judgments; but this is because he knows that his sparkling sort of brutality is the greatest kindness that can be paid a writer. There is regret for the old days in Mr. Davis's talk; he feels that writing has become more commerce than it once was. There is annoyance with writing schools, too. "You can't learn to write!" he says positively. "Either you can write, or you can't, and if you can't you might just as well stop trying." Here is a man of boundless energy, who loves his job of editing, who, having been editor of the Munsey publications for years, yet enjoys reading tons of manuscripts, writes sixty letters a day to authors, sees everyone. "The modern editor barricades himself", he complains. "How does he know he isn't missing his best new prospect?" Then, after swift words of editorial wisdom, he will drift into reminiscences. He may tell you of O. Henry or of Jack London. The day we were last talking, it was of Ambrose Bierce he spoke, that curious bitter genius, whose friendships were warm, yet changing, whose conversation over a table, Mr. Davis says, was brilliant. "Do you know the most devastating book review ever written?" he asked us, a mischievous look in his eyes. We shook our head. "Too long between covers!" Brief, conclusive, and there you are. "That was from Ambrose Bierce", said Mr. Davis. Some day, perhaps, Mr. Davis will write his reminiscences. Then we may hope to hear a good deal of truth concerning a good many authors.

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Ralph Holmes, dramatic critic and newspaper man out of the west — that is to say, Detroit — declares Will Rogers is the most modest man he's ever met. Says he never talks to the girls in the "Follies". We suggested that perhaps he thinks his conversation would be wasted. Holmes decided that Mr. Rogers is not capable of so cruel a thought. Constantly sought after by organizations desiring his services as after dinner and after theatre speaker, Mr. Rogers says it keeps him away from the kids at home, and the kids don't like it. Wants to know if the people who eat all night have any homes. That would be an amusing thing to calculate: how much time New York citizens actually do spend in their own homes. How many of them have what might truly be termed a "home"? For that matter, how many people, anywhere, have

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that? We find a valuable anecdote in Mr. Rogers's book, "The Illiterate Digest". "A Professor of Columbia University", he writes (digesting, as is this word-and-rope twirler's wont, the news), "won a prize by writing a book in 14 hours. That's a good thing. The quicker the Authors write them the quicker they can get to some useful work. But if Pascal were on earth today and heard of that feat he would say: 'That's fine, Professor, but what did you do with the other ten hours?'" To which the professor's obvious answer to Mr. Rogers is, "I wrote another one." It is interesting to watch the effect of Will Rogers's peculiar, dry form of wit on audiences. Occasionally, we have seen him quite unable to warm the huge crowd in the New Amsterdam Theatre; other times, they love him before he starts. Robert C. Benchley, in discussing his own last year's appearance in "The Music Box", noted the same phenomenon, apparently common to most monologists. Heywood Broun, with material which is vastly amusing to the lecture audience, found great difficulty in putting it across last year in a Broadway revue. Benchley, of course, proved successful with the majority of audiences. J. C. Nugent, another public raconteur of note, coauthor of "Kempy", can practically always command the laughter of audiences. We saw him, the other evening at Keith's, struggle manfully and finally succeed with one of the coldest aggregations of human beings in which we have ever sat. We tried deliberately to "Haw! Haw!" and were actually afraid of our own voice.

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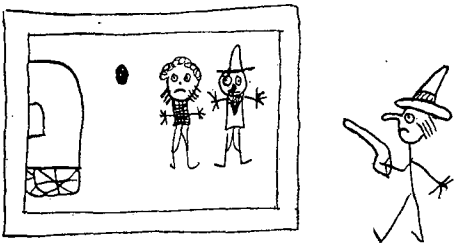
The winner of the Dodd, Mead-Famous Players-Pictorial Review prize of $13,500 for a novel is a most charming young lady. At Mr. Dodd's reception for her she was gracious, shy, and obviously sincere. Born in the Norwegian mountains, living most of her life in farm countries, in Minnesota and South Dakota until she was



*A picture of Will Banion firing a shot at "The Covered Wagon", drawn by Frances Wright, age 13, for her essay on "My Book Friends at the Movies".*

fifteen, then in Manitoba, she yet finds New York enjoyable, and her new success exciting. The title of her novel, "The Passionate Flight", is a trifle misleading. It is a story of farm life, not of flapper dissipation. If it has any of the quality of her poetry, samples of which were recently to be found in "Books", it must be more than interesting. A book of her poems, we learned, is also to be published shortly. We quote one which seems to us to have beauty:

THE LEXICON

There are dark, human things
  You know not, simple grasses,
Colder than the cold wings
  Of the lone wild duck that passes
Hereover in the late fall;
  Warmer than the warm stain
On the thorn where the tall
  Stag winced in swift pain;
Harder than the strange stone
  That grows not e'en a brier,
Softer than the mist blown
  Athwart marsh-fire.
I have learned dark things
  You know not, simple grasses, —
Teach me what your cricket sings
  Until my learning passes.

Confronted by Martha Ostenso's quiet smile, soft white dress with its quaint embroidery, and her flushed modesty,

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we became suddenly silent. We couldn't think of a thing to say. Many literary ladies are eager to talk of themselves, but this one quite obviously didn't want to talk about herself at all. She was thoroughly happy among what seemed to us one of the nicest groups of literary folk we have seen gathered together in months, and they were thoroughly happy in liking her. We did ask her what she intended doing now, and her reply was, "Well, I suppose I'll go to Europe!" She said it laughingly, knowing full well that every American author who can afford to buy passage has apparently decided to do just that. May Edginton, here from London on a brief visit, proved to be a pretty little woman, much entertained by America. We commented on her short visit, whereupon, like Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, she announced that it was much better to stay in this expensive land a short time than not to be able to go home at all. That seemed very sensible. We hope to see Miss Ostenso again before she pays a visit to Paris or her native Norway. She is only twenty four, has taught school, was once a contributor to the Junior Page of the Minneapolis "Journal", and became so embarrassed when someone asked her how long it took her to write her novel that it was a most encouraging sign. Most novelists tell you with great glee just how short a time it took them to produce their latest effort, but Miss Ostenso feels that she should have taken longer, and refuses to divulge the actual amount of time spent in writing and rewriting.

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We visited Erasmus Hall High School in Flatbush the other day and were royally greeted, and shown about by Miss Weirich of the English department. Talking in the library, where volumes go back to ages and ages ago when Alexander Hamilton was a patron of the school, we were not astonished to find the crowd of students eager with questions about modern authors, highly intelligent, and quite articulate in expressing their opinions. One famous American novelist would be horrified could he have heard what they think of his young people (the ones in his novels). Youth is certainly frank! This is a lovely old school, with its fireplace preserved from old days, with its farmhouse — in the midst of a quadrangle of stone buildings — where boys and girls of generations ago conned books (some of them with the same reading matter as those we con today). Certainly Erasmus has as much atmosphere as most universities, in spite of the staggering number of students, some 7,000 if we remember correctly. Miss Weirich has studio classes in English composition. We should like to attend one of the classes; but we weren't invited. One young lady asked us, "Will you please tell me what is the best way of disposing of manuscripts?" Now *that's* a question to answer in two seconds, isn't it? Speaking of youth, we met the other evening Glenway Wescott, whose book "The Apple of the Eye" has been more than warmly received by certain critics. He is a frail and personable Wisconsin young man, who has somehow acquired the manners and speech of Merrie England, possibly because he spent some time there last year. A lock of hair droops in unruly fashion over his forehead. His hands are expressive. He looks exactly as George Babbitt probably believes a young author would, and as most young authors do not. In spite of these facts, he writes forcefully and is doubtless what the editors of "The Dial" think he is, "a Genius". Speaking of George Babbitt, we heard of a young man just

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elected to his local Rotary Club who arose to accept the greetings of his fellows with, "I am happy that this honor has been done me, and I hereby thank all Rotarians, everywhere, including George Babbitt." After the luncheon, he overheard a fellow Rotarian approach the president of the organization. "Who is that fellow Babbitt?" was the question. "I don't remember ever having met him." "Oh, don't you know?" said the president, confidently. "That's the man in a book by Upton Sinclair." Sinclair Lewis, having returned to England, doubtless finds happiness again. We saw him only briefly, wandering disconsolately at the back of a theatre, obviously bored by what was going on on the stage. So were we. More than bored. It was our own play. Upton Sinclair is to give some debates (does one *give* debates?) in New York City. If his debates are as provocative as his propaganda discussions on the printed page, they will be worth attention. We forget the name of the young Irish genius, encountered along with the young Mr. Wescott, who proclaimed, "Of course James Joyce is the greatest living genius!" So far as we could hear, no one said him nay. But then, he did say it so positively; and if one is Irish, attractive, and says a thing loudly enough, what more is necessary to be believed? Robert Nathan, having finished his novel about Jonah, is now teaching a course in poetry at New York University. Mr. Nathan sat quietly in a corner — or was it in the corner of a sofa? — on this same memorable evening. He chatted amiably with Mrs. Alfred Kreymborg. The writer of puppet plays has returned to New York from the south, and is engaged in putting the finishing touches on his autobiography. The writing of autobiographies is becoming fashionable among our young literates. We suggested to Mr. Wescott that he write his, and he seemed favorably inclined. Nathalia Crane, the youthful Brooklyn poetess, will doubtless find much to say, also.

*Sketched by E. T. Middleditch*

The sudden interest in murders vies with that in cross word puzzles. We met Dorothy Gish at dinner recently, looking for all the world like Alice in Wonderland. She confessed that she had done her hair with the famous young lady in mind, and immediately told us various interesting things about murders and books on murder. Edmund Lester Pearson, of the New York Public Library, has given us an exciting and, in spite of its grim subject, entertaining volume in "Studies in Murder". Miss F. Tennyson Jesse, the English short story writer and novelist, is more analytical in her "Murder and Its Motives". She classifies motives, then gives a lurid example of each variety. These are books to make a

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quiet evening at home mentally exciting, if you care for that sort of excitement. Looking back to the knitting ladies surrounding Parisian guillotines, we have no doubt that there are many readers for these books; and remembering the gentle Miss Gish, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes (who professes exceeding interest in crime), and the fact that we ourself once wrote a novel in which there were six or more killings (incidentally our collaborator now edits cross word puzzle books), we hope that interest in them is not always a sign of great morbidity. We like the last two paragraphs of Miss Tennyson Jesse's first chapter:

> What can possibly be the explanation of this curious mental attribute in the victims of murderers? To the impartial onlooker, it almost suggests a hypnotised attitude of a bird before a snake; partly, no doubt, the explanation lies in that instinct which forbids one to believe that anything terrible can happen to oneself or to anyone in one's immediate circle; but that is not enough to explain the phenomenon entirely.
>
> Perhaps at some far future date, when the laws of attraction and repulsion are more fully understood than they are at present, it will be discovered that murderers and murderees send out wave-lengths that correspond as do the wave-lengths of wireless between certain stations. Meanwhile, this curious question must remain something of a mystery.

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The day before the Harvard-Yale game, which was unusual in regard to score, and unique in that 75,000 people were probably wetter than 75,000 people ever were before at the same time, we lunched with Heywood Broun, and found him as human as always. We had just read "Sitting on the World", his new collection of rambling essays. There are excellent things in the book. And it is remarkably easy to read. Several of Broun's best short pieces are here, like "Joe Grim" and the reports contained in "Convention Sketches", tales of the goings on of our illustrious politicians in convention assembled. Perhaps the paragraph from the pen of the prolific columnist most talked of locally during the past year was the following: "Wistful people ask for nothing and get everything which can be wrapped up and labelled. The straightforward person who moves through the world speaking up in an audible voice to say, 'I want that', will be greatly rebuffed. It seems to be more effective just to look longingly and say nothing." There is much more to the essay; but you have no idea how many people went about looking wistful for the next few weeks. You could just see the girls on the subway following Mr. Broun's advice. As for the people who bring manuscripts to editorial offices — they developed deep, lustrous, wistful eyes that description beggars. Going back to the flood in the Yale Bowl, which threatened to wash it loose and send it out on a Noah's Ark pilgrimage, one young lady remarked that it was worth ruined hat, soaked shoes, and all the rest to know that there were 75,000 Americans crazy enough to sit there through it. The tragedy of it was that there were 5,000 crazy enough to stay away. The papers report that girls did not look their best under such conditions. True. Hats covered by cracker boxes are not properly effective, nor is stringing hair; but let us bear witness to the effectiveness of modern cosmetics. Complexions, so far as we were able to observe, did not fail! Mr. Broun must have found it an inspiring sight when old Yale grads stood hatless during the singing of "Bright College Years", their white hair and whiskers streaming, as sight and sound were obliterated by a fresh cloudburst. The literary effort of our section was given by the robust young man on our left, whose ruddy complexion and breezy manner

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defied all elements. "Nothing matters," he shouted at each new burst of fury on the part of the elements, "nothing matters if it doesn't rain!" Mr. Broun admitted the other day that football had not interested him as much as usual this season, so it was with undue curiosity that we picked up his account of this water polo game, only to find that weather stimulates him, and that he is a masterful reporter of aquatic sports.

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Our delight in "The Triumph of the Nut", "Twisted Tales", etc., has made us curious to know something of Christopher Ward. We have heard rumors that he is a sedate lawyer. Now comes a drawing of him, and an account in his own hand of how he came to be a parodist. "For many years I had been a gentle reader — one of the gentlest", he begins. "No matter what friend author did, I accepted it without remonstrance. . . . I was simply one of the vast army of mute inglorious readers." But there is an end to all things. Along came "This Freedom". Says Mr. Ward: "The camel was overloaded. The worm revolted. Arising in my seat in the decorous and silent stalls, I pronounced these words: 'With a great price ($2.00) purchased I "This Freedom". Now I shall use it!' Whereupon I climbed to the topmost gallery and flung upon the stage my first challenge, the parody 'Some Freedom!' And the gallery, truehearted sons of liberty, applauded. There followed 'The Triumph of the Nut', 'Gentleman into Goose', and 'Twisted Tales', wherein I carefully explained to thirty or more of our authors exactly where they alighted. And have they heard Their Master's Voice? In the newer books, are plots more probable, styles more simple, eccentricities less evident, human nature more nearly human? Well, on the whole, I can't say they be." Though novelists may be no better for the reading of these

*Christopher Ward*

parodies, many a layman will bless the day upon which Mr. Ward was moved to revolt.

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Everyone realizes that the American or English producer who undertakes to "do" Shakespeare has to compete with the preconceived ideas of each individual in the audience. Consider then the difficulty under which M. Firmin Gémier labored when he produced for a New York public "The Merchant of Venice". For M. Gémier thought it necessary not only to Gallicize and, to our idea, jazz the whole performance, but also to change, in continuity and sometimes in context, the play itself. He had his performers rush onto the stage from all corners of the theatre, and he outdid Robert Edmond Jones by presenting not one flight of steps but two. One rose clear across the back stage, the other led down into the orchestra. On this latter front porch, so to speak, the principal characters proceeded to sit them down and talk con-

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fidentially to the first few rows of the audience. In the subsequent production of "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" they went so far as to eat at a table spread there, under orchestral noses. The effect upon the spectators of such intimacy was nothing short of embarrassing. At one stage of the "Gentilhomme", when a mob of frenzied Turks came dashing down the centre aisle blowing horns and shouting raucously, the audience appeared to feel that it must have strayed into a Winter Garden show by mistake. But to return to our Shakespeare, Stark Young has this interesting comment to make, anent "The Merchant of Venice", on his Sunday "Times" page:

> These arrangements do no harm if you like your Shakespeare that way; though they are shallow technically because they have no necessity in this particular play. But they will be useful if they illustrate how unimportant are many of the upheavals that arise in the theatre and its theory. We have had in our midst a spell of them for the last ten years. Sometimes, after one of these experimental and innovative commotions, there is something that remains of value, some new stretch in the expression of the play, some new gain in possibilities, or an added excitement, just as the liver and the pores of the skin may speed themselves up sometimes after a fit of anger, piety or new resolutions. But the solid necessities of the theatre stay the same, as the human body or human nature stays the same under many cycles of time and thought, and cannot be overlooked or scamped without disaster. It would be interesting if M. Gémier's mild violences and theatrical experiments should prove to be one of the steps toward a reaction in our theatre.

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In the springtime Amy Lowell will journey to England, where she will speak before various learned societies, at universities, at the opening of a Keats Memorial. By the time this note is published, her "Life of John Keats" will probably be available at last. Its publication was delayed so that Miss Lowell could include new material. Writing a biography becomes a game of pitch and toss these days. Special material must be bought, prices fly unbelievably high at public auction, those successfully purchasing unpublished letters refuse to allow their use. One of the most brilliant of recent American biographies cost its young author so much to put together that he despairs of ever being reimbursed by means of royalties. However, it must be a fascinating effort, that of reconstructing the details of a great life. Miss Lowell has spent three years on her John Keats, and her interest in the book is unswerving. Editors, press men, publishers, have sought the Lowell library to decide as to the exact format of the two volume life. Under the shadow of the Lowell orchids, so to speak, the young poet has been revived. Incidentally, we have never seen the famous orchids in such good condition. There were slender, delicate white ones, and tall grotesque green fellows, flourishing before the great bookcases. Miss Lowell had much to say, chiefly questionings, since she had been unable to pay her usual visits to town and wondered amiably how her friends and enemies were progressing. The hysterical interest in poetry which swept the country a few years ago is passing, she believes. Cynically, she remarks that it never was a real interest. In this opinion we do not entirely concur. It is true that one of the great American poets (not Miss Lowell, who never fails to fill a hall) recently spoke to a handful of persons in a large town, and that this would not have happened a year or two ago. The interest, however, has shifted to the personal. Anyone who does not believe that the American public likes, at least, to *write* poetry, may test the matter by coming in any day to read the manuscripts crossing our desk.

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Does it improve with the years? It's hard to tell because one's own taste, to say nothing of one's patience, varies.

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Those critics who despair of any progress in the technique of the motion picture should have been present at the pre-release showing of Richard Barthelmess's new vehicle "Classmates". This picture is adapted from the play made memorable in our pigtail days by Robert Edeson. The fact that many of the scenes were taken at West Point, with the cooperation of the military authorities, adds greatly to its beauty and effectiveness. Upon the conclusion of the performance the audience was requested to remain for a showing of a moving picture adapted from the same play in 1914, featuring Blanche Sweet, Henry Walthall, Marshall Neilan, and Lionel Barrymore. That was a treat indeed! True, the film was run off at a wickedly cruel pace, which made the actors appear like so many jumping jacks. And the music of the period was chosen with malicious intent. But the wooden gestures, the melodramatic poses, the yellow-journal headlines which served as titles, convulsed the audience. West Point was represented by a couple of tents, pitched nowhere in particular; and the frollicking "cadets" looked old enough to send sons to the Academy. We wonder how Mr. Neilan, in his present directorial wisdom, reacts to such an example of his former dramatic exploits.

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Two unusual experiments in children's books appeared this autumn — many more, doubtless, but these two have come to our notice. Tony Sarg's book for children "from six to sixty" is a colorful volume with its drawings and its gay text, in the preparation of which Anne Stoddard is an acknowledged assistant. The cover of this volume is particularly unusual, containing as it does a tiny theatre with scenes which revolve behind it. The text, which might be called semi-historical, is a robust and fantastic telling of stories of famous people. The narrative of Christopher Columbus and his educated

*From "Tony Sarg's Book for Children"*

egg is not without charm. Its quality can be gathered from the following quotation: "When Chris arrived in Spain, the first thing he did was to boil a dozen eggs for his breakfast. He could not eat a whole dozen of course so he began to try some tricks with those that were left. But first he boiled them hard so that there should be no accidents." The other book, titled "Dreamland", has poor verses but a vastly entertaining plan — pictures of carousels, circus rings, and sichlike with slots cut in them so that various paper doll characters may be fitted in. We have been playing with this book most of the afternoon. One fascinating thing you can do is to put all the circus characters into the seashore picture where they really don't belong, we suppose — but after all, why shouldn't the monkey or

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the tightrope walker sit upon the beach?

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The creator of "Little Lord Fauntleroy" recently died. Frances Hodgson Burnett, novelist and writer of stories for children, was much admired by a large host of followers. We saw her only once, in a box at the opening of Mary Pickford's production of her most famous story. She sat quietly, an imposing, detached figure, opposite Miss Pickford and her athletic husband. How firmly that velvet clothed little figure of propriety has imbedded itself in our national conscience. Can we forget our first velvet suit worn wanly to dancing school? There is a rollicking Fauntleroy yarn in Irvin Cobb's "Goin' on Fourteen", by the way. We think Mrs. Burnett would have enjoyed it. Mr. Cobb was passing by the Shop the other morning, just back from a fishing trip and on his way to the office in which he hides himself and writes when in town. He came in, jovial as always, sat firmly and dangerously on the small chair. Was Juney Custer of "Goin' on Fourteen" a picture of himself as a small boy? "Not exactly — and yet, not exactly not." Most of the incidents of this human and entertaining story of a boy's fourteenth year are true incidents, remembered from Mr. Cobb's boyhood, a boyhood, by the way, that has not yet ceased. It is the same things that Juney Custer liked to do that Irvin Cobb likes best to do now. By that we do not mean tying cans to cats' tails, although, to be precise, Juney never did it; but hunting, fishing, swapping yarns with his friends. We did not ask Irvin Cobb if he had ever worn a Lord Fauntleroy suit. We saw him in a cutaway the other day, and he was imposing; but velvet breeches? He probably did. Certainly Juney did. "Goin' on Fourteen" is only one filled year of the life of a delightful boy, a boy that has seemed to many critics as lovable and thoroughly human a creation as has graced the pages of America's books about boys. We asked Mr. Cobb if Juney was to stop forever with his last chapter, dreaming before his mirror of the flow and sweep of lengthier trousers. No, Juney will not stop here, it seems; there will be new adventures — "Long Pants", they may be called. The question is, will Mr. Cobb, in treating of adolescence, be able to be as amusing without laughing at his boy, which is what so many of our writers concerning youth do. So far, Juney is a portrait rather than a caricature. His adventures and his moods are in no particular exaggerated. What will become of him now?

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We arrived at Scranton on a bright day, and were driven through drab parks, and not shown a coal mine, which we regret. That was no one's fault, for there was little time. What a strange thought it must be for Scranton folk, until they become accustomed to it, that they are living on hollow ground, over coal tunnels. (Come to think of it, not any stranger than living over subways.) Occasionally, they say, a house falls into a coal mine. Or was the kind lady who drove the car gently spoofing us? South Wellesley we found exhilarating. One lady arose in meeting and said firmly that she preferred "Rose of the World" to "Arnold Waterlow", and that it was much better to read Kathleen Norris than May Sinclair. No one argued with her very loudly, for it was evident that that would mean a discussion of literature on moral grounds, which, after all, is endless. Gamaliel Bradford, entirely recovered from his illness,

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greeted us pleasantly at the door of his white hilltop house. His new volume of portraits, to follow "Bare Souls", is to be called "Wives". This has no Bluebeard connection. It is a series of pictures of wives of famous Americans. The volume should, of course, naturally be followed by "Husbands", a series of pictures of husbands of famous wives. What a difference! Spreading it out carefully on a card table in the library, Mr. and Mrs. Bradford and ourself tried to decipher Vachel Lindsay's latest performance, a large pictorial map of his soul, arranged in William Blake manner. Now that we look back on it we're not at all sure that it was his soul; but it was a map of something quite as indefinite. Mr. Lindsay is in Portland now, we understand. Gamaliel Bradford works away quietly in his study, surrounded by high shelves of books on American history. He would like to produce a series of portraits covering the entire range of history. It would be a psychographic portrait of the world. Mr. Bradford is tall, slender, grey, with delicate features and keen eyes; he talks quietly of many things. Of late months, he has been going out more than for some years past, driving here and there around Boston and the suburbs with Mrs. Bradford. Occasionally he goes over to Katharine Lee Bates's seminar at Wellesley. We did not see Miss Bates on this visit, and missed her good talk, sound advice, and magnificent parrot, to say nothing of the dog. Marguerite Wilkinson, who tells us that she has recently seen her, says that the author of "America the Beautiful" changes little, and is as kindly as always.

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Nonsense is rare — good nonsense. It is as fleeting as a good epigram, and rarer, for epigrams these days are as common as the appreciation of Bernard Shaw. How Bernard Shaw must hate himself for being appreciated. That's the trouble with wanting to be bitter — you're always finding out how sweet you really are. It's nothing at all to go down Fifth Avenue

*From "So Human"*

these days and hear some young lady say, "Oh, yes, 'Saint Joan'; what a sweet play!" However, getting back to the point, "So Human" by Don Herold, one of those little books of nonsense so plentiful in the stalls at Christmas time, seems to us to be good nonsense. Don Herold is a sort of burlesque Dr. Frank Crane. His feeling that life is real, that life is earnest, is important in an entirely different way. He is inspirational when he lauds the peanut industry, and when he proposes the constant wearing of tights. There is the tragedy of the ginger cooky fiend, and his reform. This is a paper whose pathos cannot help but stir BOOKMAN readers to forego the terrible habit. Have you never started to eat a tin of ginger cookies, and been unable to stop before the last brown disk was consumed? You will appreciate Mr. Herold's satires, then. Take that masterpiece of economic writing, "How We Increased Our Expenditures $10,000 a Year", which concludes:

> At the end of six months we were pretty good spenders, and were well established in a routine of life entirely new. We had

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found that we had lost nearly all of our old friends, but new ones had come easily. And we felt that the loss of our old group of friends threw light upon their real character. Those who dropped us just because we were more prosperous were really not worth having as friends. I say prosperous — and I know that when I state that we were now spending money at the rate of $14,000 a year, while my salary remained at $10,000, very few of my readers will disagree with me.

And, really, we were just as happy living this way as we had been when we were spending $6,000 less than I earned. And, what is more, I believe that any young couple can do as much. For we are just like most other young married couples, fairly well educated, of middle class parents, and with not a great deal of ordinary common sense.

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Book Week at Wanamaker's fell in the warm days which characterized our early winter. We enjoyed Tom Masson's speech best of all. One nice lady insisted on reading an entire chapter of her book, which was simply bad showmanship on the part of the lady; for once she started there seemed no way of stopping, though it was quite evident that she wanted to stop. Few long chapters from any story book can stand non-professional reading to a large audience. Seeing Karsavina dance the other evening made plain the necessity for showmanship. Karsavina is a great dancer. She is a beautiful woman. You should not miss seeing her if you have the opportunity. But her program was so poorly planned that she was forced to dance most of the time to a cold audience, wanting to applaud but finding little opportunity because of the odd arrangement of awkward numbers. At Wanamaker's we met Mrs. Belloc Lowndes and her daughter. The novelist is a vivid, bright, plump, jovial woman, who talks with an English accent made a trifle exotic by the addition of French gutturals. Her new novel, "The Terreford Mystery", is about to be published, and she told us of a recent play of hers in London, dramatized from a book. "I didn't know it was going to be funny until the first night!" she said, a statement which might be variously interpreted. What she meant was that she hadn't known the dramatist had made a farce of a mystery. Not having come to lecture, she assured us that she shouldn't be able to stay long, and we all agreed amiably that New York is one of the most expensive places in the world in which to live. Later, at tea, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes told three funny stories, and, reminded by us of a ballad of her brother's, recited it gaily, much to our embarrassment and to the delight of Isabel Paterson, the Book Worm of the New York "Herald-Tribune". Remembering Hilaire Belloc from last season, we recall one of the most graceful of our many English visitors. He had a rather terrifying way of making you feel that at any moment he might convert you to his faith; but if you stood rockbound in your Protestantism, pretty soon you found that he was persuasive but withstandable. Which reminds us that the Catholic Writers' Guild recently gave a party at the Hotel Plaza, where famous singers mingled with writers and the clergy, and people of several races and creeds joined hands in the name of art. This admirable undertaking was engineered by the tolerant and charming Father Robert Kelly, who writes verses and acts as spiritual adviser of the Guild. He is an earnest young priest, who claims that there are a great many more religiously inclined persons in this godless town than we realize or, possibly, than realize it themselves. Perhaps, again, religion and art will go hand in hand.

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